

2004
STATEWIDE ALLIGATOR HARVEST
TRAINING AND ORIENTATION MANUAL



**Prepared by the Alligator Management Section
Bureau of Wildlife Resources
Division of Wildlife
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
TRAINING AND ORIENTATION SCHEDULE	2
ALLIGATORS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT IN FLORIDA	3
SECTION ONE: PREPARING FOR THE HUNT	5
Requirements	6
Tips	6
Review your materials	6
Licensing your trapping agents	7
Questions and answers	7
Alligator Hunting Guides	9
SECTION TWO: HUNTING TECHNIQUES AND SAFETY	11
Requirements	12
Harvest techniques and equipment	12
Questions and answers	14
Treatment of alligator bites	16
Boat safety and registration	20
SECTION THREE: HARVESTING YOUR ALLIGATOR	21
Requirements	22
Tips	23
Questions and answers	23
Harvest Report Form	24
SECTION FOUR: PROCESSING YOUR ALLIGATOR	26
Requirements	27
Questions and answers	28
List of Processors	29
SECTION FIVE: CARING FOR YOUR ALLIGATOR SKIN	30
Requirements	31
Tips	31
Questions and answers	31
Skin curing and storage	32
List of fur and hide dealers	33
SECTION SIX: ALLIGATOR REGULATIONS	34
Regulations governing statewide alligator trapping, permitting, taking and sale.	35
Regulations governing the processing of alligators and the sale of alligator meat and parts.	37

INTRODUCTION

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's statewide alligator harvest is an important component of alligator management in Florida. This alligator harvest receives statewide, national, and international attention, providing an excellent opportunity to inform the public about the value of alligators and wetlands while allowing participants to benefit from this renewable natural resource.

The Training and Orientation booklet has been prepared to:

1. Familiarize participants and other interested persons with program goals and objectives.
2. Familiarize participants with accepted methods and equipment for taking alligators, while emphasizing safety considerations and responsibility for public perception of harvest activities.
3. Serve as a review of and future reference for pertinent rules, regulations, and reporting procedures governing and associated with the statewide alligator harvest.

By reading the enclosed information, you will be better prepared for the hunt. This booklet will familiarize you with common hunting techniques and safety; how to harvest your alligator; requirements for processing your alligator; and how to care for your alligator hide. This Training and Orientation booklet contains basic information regarding the alligator harvest program. For more information, visit our website at <http://MyFWC.com/alligator> or contact the Alligator Management Section at:

EUSTIS:

Mr. Arnold Brunell / Ms. Jodi Bock/
Mr. John White / Ms. Alice Mason
North Florida Alligator Field Station
601 W. Woodward Ave.
Eustis, FL 32726
(352) 742-6383

OKEECHOBEE:

Mr. Lindsey Hord / Ms. Blair Hayman/
Ms. Linda Collins
South Florida Alligator Field Station
8122 U.S. Highway 441 S.E.
Okeechobee, FL 34974
(863) 462-5196

GAINESVILLE:

Mr. Allan Woodward / Mr. Dwayne Carbonneau
Ms. Patricia Linihan
Wildlife Research Laboratory
4005 S. Main Street
Gainesville, FL 32601-9099
(352) 955-2230

TALLAHASSEE:

Mr. Harry Dutton / Mr. Steve Stiegler
Farris Bryant Building
620 S. Meridian Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600
(850) 488-3831

2004 TRAINING AND ORIENTATION SCHEDULE

NOTE: ATTENDANCE IS NOT MANDATORY, BUT WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU GO TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CLASSES EVEN IF YOU HAVE ATTENDED THEM IN THE PAST. THE CLASSES ARE FREE AND RESERVATIONS ARE NOT REQUIRED.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
July 31 (Saturday)	1:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Orlando, Holiday Inn International Drive Resort , 6515 International Drive. For directions call (407) 351-3500.
August 4 (Wednesday)	6:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Gainesville, Paramount Plaza Hotel and Suites , 2900 S.W. 13th Street. For directions call (352) 377-4000.
August 7 (Saturday)	1:00 PM - 4:00 PM	West Palm Beach, South Florida Water Management District , 3301 Gun Club Road. For directions call (561) 686-8800 or (863) 462-5195.
August 14 (Saturday)	1:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Tampa, AmeriSuites Hotel , 11408 N 30th Street (near Busch Gardens). For directions call (813) 979-1922 or (863) 462-5195.
August 18 (Wednesday)	6:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Tallahassee, Bryant Building, 2nd Floor Auditorium , 620 South Meridian Street. For directions call (850) 488-3831.
August 21 (Saturday)	1:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Okeechobee, Okeechobee County Civic Center , 1750 U.S. Hwy 98 North. For directions call (863) 462-5195.

ALLIGATORS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT IN FLORIDA

The American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) is a reptile scientifically classified in the Family Alligatoridae. It is similar in appearance to the endangered American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*) which is classified in the Family Crocodylidae. Habitat preferences and several physical characteristics distinguish the American alligator from the American crocodile. Alligators primarily inhabit freshwater; however, they may be found in any body of water or wetland throughout Florida. American crocodiles primarily inhabit coastal swamps and rivers in extreme southern Florida. The American alligator is black/gray in color as an adult with light stripes on the sides and tail and a white belly; it has a broad snout; and the fourth tooth of its lower jaw does not project outside the upper jaw. Whereas, the American crocodile is brown/tan in color with dark splotches on the sides and tail; it has a narrow snout; and the fourth tooth of its lower jaw projects outside the upper jaw. The American alligator's range extends from the south tip of Texas to the northeastern edge of North Carolina. Florida's wetlands support only two of 23 different species of crocodilians in the world.

The alligator is a key species in Florida's wetland ecosystems. While functioning as a top predator, alligators also provide important habitats for many wetland species. Alligators create or maintain natural depressions called "gator holes" which become important reservoirs for other species of wetland wildlife, especially during droughts when these depressions often become the last remaining aquatic refuge. Furthermore, alligator nests in marsh systems may provide an important nesting substrate for a number of wetland species, particularly red-bellied turtles.

Alligators have been part of Florida's environment for thousands of years, and records of commercial exploitation of alligators in Florida date back to the late 1800's. Harvesting of alligators went unregulated through the early 1900's. In 1943, concerns about population declines in easily accessible areas stimulated establishment of a four-foot minimum size limit (the first statewide alligator regulation). In spite of this regulation, declines continued. In 1954, a statewide six-foot minimum size limit was imposed, and eventually, in 1962, the legal alligator harvest season was closed. The closed season, however, did not stop widespread exploitation because state laws were not effective in closing down a well established interstate network of illegal hide dealers. As a result, alligators were included on the first list of endangered species in 1967. In 1970, effective federal regulations were imposed through an amendment to the Lacey Act that outlawed interstate shipment of alligators taken illegally. This regulation gave enforcement officials the tool to effectively end the poaching era, and alligator populations in areas where declines had been observed made an impressive comeback.

By the mid-1970's, alligator population surveys conducted by Commission biologists indicated that most populations were increasing rapidly. At that time, the Commission was receiving 4,000 to 5,000 nuisance alligator complaints annually. In 1977, the status of Florida's alligator population was reclassified from endangered to threatened by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This change in status allowed the Commission to initiate management of the nuisance alligator problem through harvest, resulting in our current nuisance alligator control program.

In 1980, the Commission's alligator research staff began focusing its efforts on the impact of alligator harvests on wild populations. As a result of these investigations and subsequent experimental alligator harvests on selected wetlands, the Commission created an Alligator Management Program, later to become the Alligator Management Section (AMS) within the Division of Wildlife's Bureau of Wildlife Resources. The major objectives of the AMS are to implement alligator harvest programs under the concept of sustained annual harvests while optimizing the economic, aesthetic, and ecological values of alligators as a

renewable natural resource. By emphasizing these values, the Commission hopes to provide incentives for conservation of not only the alligator, but also the wetland ecosystems they inhabit.

Currently, the Commission's AMS administers or supports the administration of four management programs:

1. **THE STATEWIDE ALLIGATOR HARVEST PROGRAM**

This program enables the harvest of non-hatchling alligators (those greater than about 18 inches in total length) on specific public water bodies or within specific counties. A total of 2,043 individuals were permitted in 2003 to take two alligators on their specified area.

2. **THE PRIVATE LANDS ALLIGATOR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

This program allows the harvest of non-hatchling alligators (those greater than about 18 inches in total length) on private landholdings with a documented, harvestable alligator population or a minimum of 1,000 acres of alligator habitat. In addition, this program allows collection of alligator eggs and/or hatchlings on landholdings with a documented minimum of 1,000 acres of alligator habitat or a documented minimum number of nests or hatchling pods.

3. **THE PUBLIC WATERS ALLIGATOR EGG AND HATCHLING COLLECTION PROGRAM**

This program allows the collection of alligator eggs and hatchlings from public waters by licensed alligator farmers who must meet specific requirements established by Commission rule.

4. **THE NUISANCE ALLIGATOR CONTROL PROGRAM (NACP)**

Administered by the Division of Law Enforcement through contracts between the Commission and alligator trappers, this program authorizes harvest of alligators that are determined to be a threat to the welfare of the public, or the public's pets, livestock, or property.

SECTION ONE: PREPARING FOR THE HUNT

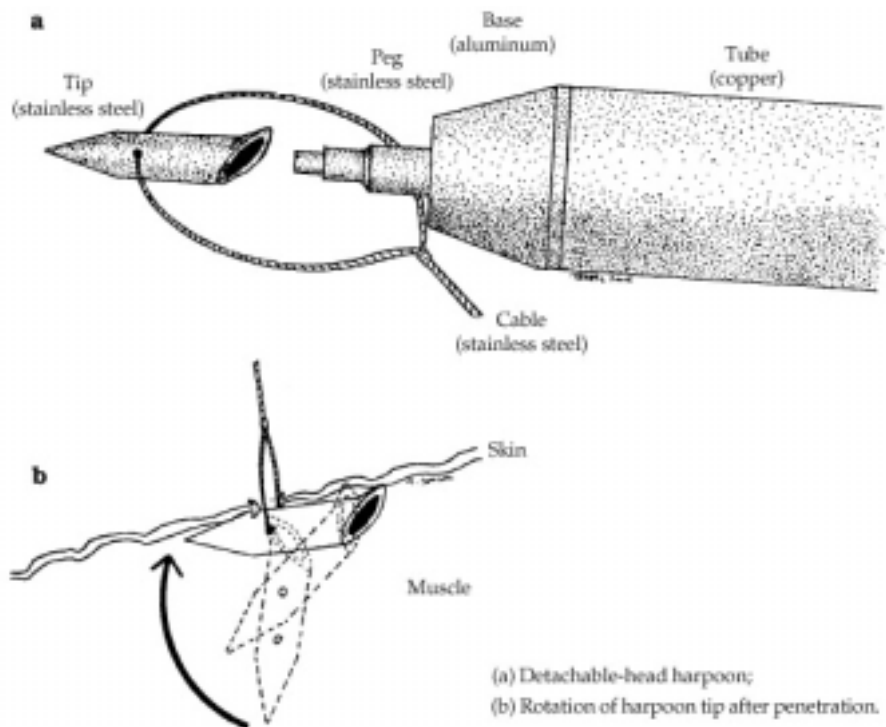
✓ REQUIREMENTS

✓ TIPS

✓ REVIEWING YOUR MATERIALS

✓ LICENSING YOUR TRAPPING AGENTS

✓ QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Selected participants **cannot** give their permit or CITES tags to someone else. Only the licensed trapper and his licensed agents may possess the CITES tags.
- ✓ Licensed agents may only take alligators in the presence of the permittee.
- ✓ Please review Rule 68A-25.042, F.A.C., in Section Six on page 35 for other rule requirements.

TIPS

- ✓ Purchase your equipment and become familiar with it well in advance of your harvest period.
- ✓ If you make agreements with guides, processors, or hide buyers make sure you do so **in writing**.
- ✓ If you choose to process your alligators through an alligator processor or sell your hides to a hide buyer, you should contact these merchants prior to the beginning of your hunt.
- ✓ If you have difficulty finding equipment, plan on attending a training and orientation class since many vendors will be present selling their products.
- ✓ Develop a plan on how you're going to cool your alligator as quickly as possible once it is harvested.
- ✓ An unlimited number of licensed agents can assist the selected participant in taking alligators.
- ✓ Any licensed alligator trapper, acting as an agent of the permittee, may take alligators but only in the presence of the permittee.

REVIEW YOUR MATERIALS

- ✓ Read your permit to make sure you understand the permit provisions, and check your name, harvest area and period for accuracy.
- ✓ Make sure you have two (2) CITES tags and that the tag numbers match what is listed on your permit. If you are permitted for the Everglades and Francis S. Taylor WMA or Holey Land WMA alligator hunts, make sure you also have two (2) pink mercury tags.
- ✓ Make sure you have two (2) harvest report forms.
- ✓ If there are any problems with your materials, please contact Mr. Steve Stiegler at (850) 488-3831 as soon as possible.

CAUTION: Be sure to put your CITES tags in a safe place where they won't be handled by small children. Children enjoy playing with these tags, and invariably lock the tags together rendering them useless. We do not have replacement tags readily available.

LICENSING YOUR AGENTS

- ✓ Permittees may license alligator trapping agents to assist them with their hunt. Agent's licenses (\$51.50) may be purchased at any county tax collector's office, sub-agent location (authorized sporting goods store or other retailer selling hunting or fishing licenses), through the Internet (<http://MyFWC.com/license/>), or by calling toll-free, (1-888-486-8356 or 1-888-347-4356) from anywhere in the United States or Canada. If purchased at a sub-agent location, an additional issuance fee of \$.50 will be charged by the sub-agent selling the license. If purchased through the Internet or telephone a convenience fee will be added as follows: Internet \$2.25 + 2.5%; toll-free phone number \$3.25 + 2.5%. **Prospective agents must have a copy of the permittee's alligator trapping license to apply for an agent's license.**
- ✓ The agent's license will be issued immediately at the vendor location.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS

- Q. How many alligators can the licensed trapper take under his permit?
- A. The number of alligators to be harvested from each management unit is determined after completion of population or habitat surveys. Each permittee will be allowed to take two (2) alligators.
- Q. When will the licensed trapper be able to hunt alligators?
- A. Each trapper will be assigned to one of four periods based on availability and on the order of preference that they indicated on their application. The harvest permit will specify the harvest period. Harvest periods shall be from ½ hour before sunset on September 1 through ½ hour after sunrise September 8 (period 1), from ½ hour before sunset on September 8 through ½ hour after sunrise September 15 (period 2), from ½ hour before sunset on September 15 through ½ hour after sunrise September 22 (period 3), and from ½ hour before sunset on September 22 through ½ hour after sunrise October 1 (period 4). Participants will be informed of their harvest period assignment in their notification letter. All participants also will be allowed to trap alligators from ½ hour before sunset October 1 through ½ hour after sunrise October 8. **Legal hunting hours are from ½ hour before sunset through ½ hour after sunrise.**
- Q. Will others be allowed to hunt with the licensed trapper?
- A. The licensed trapper may purchase, at a cost of \$50 each (plus vendor fees), licenses for **alligator trapping agents**. *Additionally, any licensed alligator trapper (\$250 resident or \$1,000 nonresident license, plus vendor fees) can assist the permittee in taking alligators during the statewide harvest.* This means that licensed trappers may assist each other without purchasing an agent's license, and that licensed nuisance trappers, private lands trappers, or anyone possessing an alligator trapping license may take alligators during the statewide harvest provided they are in the presence of (in the same boat with) the person permitted to take alligators on a specific management unit. Only the licensed trapper, his trapping agents, or other licensed alligator trappers may actually take or kill alligators. The selected applicant who is the permitted, licensed trapper **must be present during all hunting activities.**
- Q. Can the licensed trapper give his permit or CITES tags to someone else so that they can hunt alligators?
- A. **NO.** Only the licensed trapper and his trapping agents may possess tags issued to the licensed trapper, but the agents may **NOT** take alligators in the licensed trapper's absence.
- Q. Where will the licensed trapper be able to hunt alligators?
- A. Harvest areas were assigned to permittees based on the availability of preferred harvest areas and harvest periods designated on their application. Harvest permits issued to applicants selected to participate will specify the boundaries of their hunt area.

- Q. Who must attend the training and orientation seminar?
- A. Attendance **is not** mandatory. All permittees who have not attended a seminar in the past, however, are strongly encouraged to do so.
- Q. Can unlicensed persons ride in the boat if they do not participate in the hunting activities?
- A. Yes, provided those persons **do not** participate in **any** of the hunting activities.
- Q. Can I use an airboat or large outboard in my permitted area?
- A. Boat restrictions are regulated by local or regional government authorities. Contact the appropriate city, county, or water management district in the area where you are permitted. If you are permitted to hunt on a Wildlife Management Area, check the specific WMA regulations or contact the appropriate FWC regional office listed on page 19.
- Q. Can I use a guide to help me with my alligator hunt?
- A. Yes, provided the guide is a licensed alligator trapper or is licensed under you as an agent. A list of guides is provided on the following page for your convenience. These guides and outfitters are not specially licensed by the Commission, nor does the Commission establish any standards or criteria for individuals to qualify as guides or outfitters. This list includes the outfitters and guides we are aware of, and it may not be complete. Inclusion on this list does not constitute endorsement by the Commission.
- Q. I have a county-wide permit; where can I harvest alligators?
- A. If you received a county-wide alligator harvest permit, you can hunt on any area that you can legally access in the specified county. However, alligator trapping is **prohibited** in the following areas: other alligator harvest units; privately-owned waters and wetlands, except where access has been granted for the purposes of harvesting alligators under Rule 68A-25.042, F.A.C.; water management district-owned waters and wetlands, except as designated herein or where access has been granted for the purposes of harvesting alligators under Rule 68A-25.042, F.A.C.; Federally-owned lands, wildlife refuges, and parks, except where access has been granted for the purposes of harvesting alligators under Rule 68A-25.042, F.A.C.; State-owned parks, preserves, reserves, and wilderness areas, except aquatic preserves that may be designated herein; Indian reservations and lands leased to Indian tribes, except as designated herein or where access has been granted for the purposes of harvesting alligators under Rule 68A-25.042, F.A.C.; wildlife management, wildlife environmental, and public small-game hunting areas, except as designated herein; incorporated cities and municipalities; publicly-owned waters closed for scientific study or protection of alligator populations; and privately-owned waters and wetlands included in management programs governed by Rule 68A-25.032, F.A.C. It is strongly recommended that you know specific locations where you can legally harvest alligators in a county prior to applying for a county-wide permit.
- Q. Can I use a county-wide permit to take alligators on private property?
- A. YES, but only if you have been granted permission by the landowner to take alligators on their property, and if the property is not enrolled in the private lands alligator management program under Rule 68A-25.032, F.A.C.
- Q. Can I receive a refund for my fees if I am permitted but I cannot participate in the hunt?
- A. **Licenses cannot be canceled or any fee refunded** after the license is issued except in the case of the subsequent death of the license holder, his or her spouse, parent, brother, sister, son or daughter supported by a copy of the respective death certificate; incapacitating illness or injury of the license holder supported by a physician's sworn statement on a Commission form; military transfer overseas supported by a copy of the official orders from the Armed Forces of the U.S. Refunds will not be granted, regardless of the circumstances, after the earliest date of the season (September 1) for which the license is valid.

ALLIGATOR HUNTING GUIDES

Ackerly, Jon		3409 Christina Groves Lane, Lakeland, FL 33813	(863) 640-7783
Airboat & Gator Charters	Bruce Castle	807 Mockingbird Drive, Port Orange, FL 32127	(386) 212-2495
Airboat Wildlife Adventures	Chuck Hendrix	4917 US Hwy. 98, Sebring, FL 33870	(863) 655-4737
Big Gator Charter Fishing	Rick Silkworth	16147 Ravendale Drive, Tampa, FL 33618	(813) 968-6154
Bigwater Guide Service		215 East Esperanza St., Clewiston, FL 33440	(863) 599-3150
Boston Processing		Post Office Box 470002, Lake Monroe, FL 32747	(407) 322-9238
Carpenter, Charles		3701 Ambermist Drive, Tampa, FL 33619	(813) 628-8449
Cason, Alex		10078 SE 154 th Ave., White Springs, FL 32096	(904) 397-1989
Capp's Guided Gator Hunt		150 Southwest 21st Avenue, Okeechobee, FL 34974	(863) 763-6156
Carlton Chappell		2031 Hill-N-Dale North, Tallahassee, FL 32311	(850) 878-3955
Central Florida Trophy Hunts		2381 Friday Road, Cocoa, FL 32926	(321) 632-8995
Clemons, Mark		3280 4 th Ave. NE, Naples, FL 34120	(941) 455-5910
Coastal Sportsmen of Florida	Jeff Kraynik	774 Donau Ave., NW, Palm Bay, FL 32907	(321) 725-3456
Crosby, Clifford		13754 Deseret Lane, St. Cloud, FL 34773	(407) 892-3672
Equaloxic Creek Outfitters		Post Office Box 942, Bristol, FL 32321	(850) 643-5738
Everglades Adventures		30400 C.R. 833, Clewiston, FL 33440	(863) 983-8999
Dunaway, Robert Dale		P.O. Box 458, Felda, FL 33930	(863) 675-7800
Fagan, Mickey		P.O. Box 1096, Lacoochee, FL 33537	(352) 583-2786
Florida Cracker Alligator Products		4010 West Newberry Road D, Gainesville, FL 32607	(352) 372-4237
Florida Cracker Outdoor Adventures		774 Donau Avenue, Northwest, Palm Bay, FL 32907	(321) 725-3456
Fla. Outdoor Adventures Inc.	Bobby McDaniel	653 Fisher St., Lake Placid, FL 33852	(863) 441-1275
Florida Trophy Gators		502 Northeast 6th Avenue, Okeechobee, FL 34972	(863) 763-5185
Flynn, Jerry		2465 Adelia Blvd., Deltona, FL 32725	(321) 231-1685
French, John		17530 Nalle Road, N. Ft. Myers, FL 33917	(941) 543-3127
Gator Guides	Phil Walters	16147 Ravendale Drive, Tampa, FL 33617	(813) 968-6154
Godwin Corporation		10001 Bluefield Road, Okeechobee, FL 34972	(863) 357-0454
Godwin, Tiger		3169 Hwy 178, Jay, FL 32565	(850) 675-6020
H & H Guide Services	Don Hampton	3635 Aurora Road, Melbourne, FL 32934	(321) 242-1012
Haley, Mike		P.O. Box 925, Penney Farms, FL 32079	(904) 284-9345
Hunter, Tony		919 Forest Rd. Havana, Florida 32333	(850) 251-0452
Inner Ocean Alligators	Tim Tormala	15601 Burdine Ranch Road, Immokalee, FL 34142	(941) 657-2705
J & A Outfitters		1830 Northwest 41 Street, Sunrise, FL 33323	(954) 572-3883
JL's Alligator Guide Service	J. Douglas Jr,	1617 N.E. 12th Ave., Sumterville, FL 33585	(352) 748-5816
Kempfer, William		6210 Kempfer Road, St. Cloud, FL 34773	(407) 957-3593
Ken's Guide Service	Kenny Elkins	1858 SW 28th Avenue, Okeechobee, FL 34974	(863) 467-5532
Kline, Bill		3191 "E" Road, Loxahatchee, FL 33470	(561) 793-3672
L & R High Adventure Outfitters		2180 Brickell Avenue #12, Miami, FL 33129	(305) 552-7070
Livingston, John		Post Office Box 627, Labelle, FL 33935	(863) 675-5781
Lusby, Chris		1 Triangle Park, Lake Placid, FL 33852	(863) 441-0613
MasterGators	Alby Isbell		(407) 857-8020
Matthews, Gary		17485 S.W. 245 Terr., Homestead, FL 33031	(305) 219-1200
McMillan, Arlie		9751 West Bahia Vista, N. Ft. Myers, FL 33917	(941) 940-5732
Morrell, Tate		531 Cutchins Mill Road, Chipley, Florida 32428	(850) 638-3861

Note: Hunting guides and outfitters are not specifically licensed as such by the Commission, nor does the Commission establish any standards or criteria for individuals to qualify as guides or outfitters. This list includes the outfitters and guides we are aware of, and it may not be complete. On some waters, outfitters and guides are required to carry captains' licenses issued by the U.S. Coast Guard. Permittees should determine if an outfitter or guide is required to possess a U.S. Coast Guard-issued license on their permitted area prior to hiring a guide. Inclusion on this list does not constitute endorsement by this agency.

ALLIGATOR HUNTING GUIDES

Osceola Hunts	P.O. Box 369, Okeechobee, FL 34973	(863) 634-7007
Parker Island Gator Farm & Processing	1775 County Road 29, Lake Placid, FL 33862	(863) 465-3161
Parlier, Terry	10701 Foxhole Road, Clermont, FL 34711	(407) 656-3723
Peeples, Nelson	38134 16th Avenue, Zephyrhills, FL 33540	(813) 782-5048
Perkins Slaughter House	Route 3, Box 947, LaBelle, FL 33935	(863) 675-1110
Plantation Outfitters	Post Office Box 1711, Tallahassee, FL 32302	(850) 856-5753
Rose, Derrick	1718 N. Main Street, Bell, FL 32619	(352) 493-5843
Rutten, Phillip	1902 Concord Bainbridge Rd., Havana, FL 32333	(850) 539-8274
Shivers, Doug	18327 Southwest 296th Street, Homestead, FL 33030	(786) 351-4454
Shuler, Stephen	P.O. Box 942, Bristol, FL 32321	(850) 482-9600
Sutton's Guide Service	215 East Esperanza Street, Clewiston, FL 33440	(863) 983-2628
Taff, Houston	854 Arrow Rd., Crawfordville, Florida 32327	(850) 926-3778
Trusty, Roger	12177 Timberlane, Brooksville, Florida 34601	(352) 799-0636
Stafford, Greg	15098 S.E. 140th Ave. Rd., Weirsdale, FL 32195	(352) 821-0315
Walrath, George	2791 North Horizon Place, Oviedo, FL 32765	(407) 466-4544
Wright, Chad	P.O. Box 858, Lacoochee, FL 33537	(352) 583-9213

Note: Hunting guides and outfitters are not specifically licensed as such by the Commission, nor does the Commission establish any standards or criteria for individuals to qualify as guides or outfitters. This list includes the outfitters and guides we are aware of, and it may not be complete. On some waters, outfitters and guides are required to carry captains' licenses issued by the U.S. Coast Guard. Permittees should determine if an outfitter or guide is required to possess a U.S. Coast Guard-issued license on their permitted area prior to hiring a guide. Inclusion on this list does not constitute endorsement by this agency.

SECTION TWO: HUNTING TECHNIQUES AND SAFETY

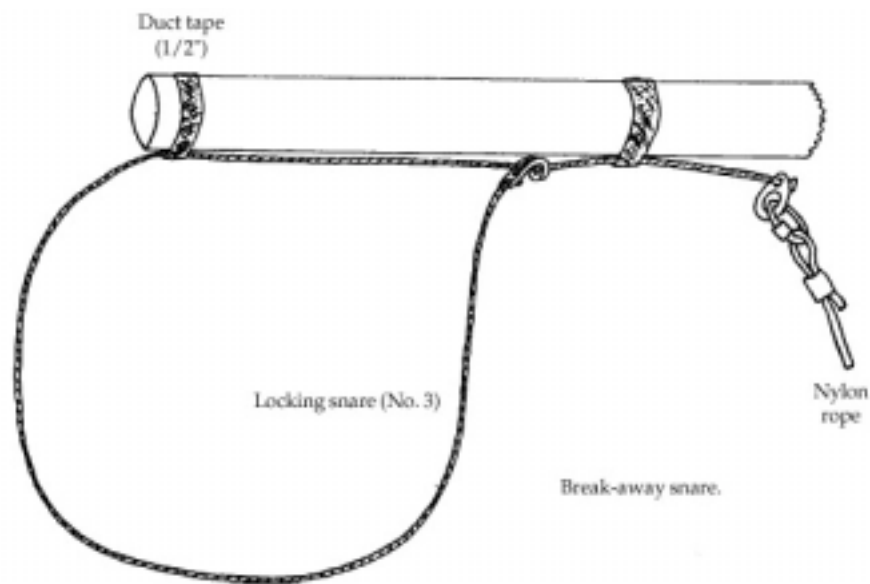
✓ REQUIREMENTS

✓ HARVEST TECHNIQUES & EQUIPMENT

✓ QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

✓ TREATMENT OF ALLIGATOR BITES

✓ BOAT SAFETY AND REGISTRATION



REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Alligators may be taken only by the use of baited, wooden pegs less than two (2) inches in length attached to a hand-held restraining line and hand-held snares, harpoons, gigs, snatch hooks, and manually operated spears, spearguns, crossbows and bows with projectiles attached to a restraining line. The use of baited hooks, gig-equipped bang sticks, or firearms for taking alligators is prohibited except that bang sticks are permitted for taking alligators attached to a restraining line.
- ✓ Please review Rule 68A-25.042, F.A.C., in Section Six on page 35 for other rule requirements.

ALLIGATOR HARVEST TECHNIQUES

This section will discuss and review effective capture and handling techniques for alligators. Although these techniques have proven effective in previous alligator harvests, by no means is the Commission promoting them as *safe*. In fact, the Commission emphasizes that by the very nature of the activity, the capture and harvest of alligators has the potential of being extremely dangerous and could result in injury to participants. The techniques, equipment, and practices described are only provided to demonstrate practical techniques that alligator trappers have used effectively under the nuisance alligator program and our statewide alligator harvests. You should be aware that many experienced alligator trappers, using similar techniques to capture alligators, have been bitten and some seriously injured. You are urged to use extreme caution and care when capturing alligators, because observing the demonstrated techniques is by no means intended to insure you will be free from harm. If you are inexperienced in capturing alligators, we encourage you to get an experienced agent to assist you and plan on attending a training and orientation seminar.

Harpoons: Harpoons have been used as an effective method for attaching a restraining line to harvest an alligator that is consistent with Commission rules. Harpoons or gigs consist of a penetrating point such as a straightened fish hook, detachable dart, fish gig, or spear point attached to a restraining line (a diagram is included on page 14). A float may be attached to the restraining line, but the line must always be hand-held or attached to the boat. The harpoon point is typically mounted on a pole, arrow shaft, or spear.

Snatch Hooks: Snatch hooks also have been used as an effective method for attaching a restraining line to harvest an alligator that is consistent with Commission rules. A snatch hook is a weighted treble hook attached to a restraining line that is hand-held or used in conjunction with a long, stout fishing rod and reel and heavy line. The hook is typically cast over the alligator or over the area where he last submerged. The hook is then retrieved until it contacts the alligator, at which point it is set with a strong pull. The line should be kept tight until the animal tires and can be approached; the hook often falls out if the line is allowed to go slack.

Baited Wooden Pegs: Baited wooden pegs less than two (2) inches in length have been used as an effective method for attaching a restraining line to harvest an alligator that is consistent with Commission rules. A baited wooden peg is attached to a restraining line that is hand-held or used in conjunction with a long, stout fishing rod and reel and heavy line. The baited peg is typically thrown or cast near the alligator or near the area where he last submerged.

Snares: Wire snares attached to a restraining line loosely mounted (using a small rubber band or piece of tape) to the end of a pole are most commonly used to secure the alligator once it has been harpooned and brought under control near the boat. Snares must be hand-held or attached to a hand-held device and cannot be left unattended.

Bang Sticks: Bang sticks have been used as an effective tool for humanely killing alligators attached to a restraining line. Bang sticks or power heads are devices typically used by divers to kill fish. They discharge a firearm cartridge by contact and are effective for killing alligators. For a humane kill, the shot should be centered immediately behind the skull cap and angled toward the brain. It is recommended that the bang stick be used in compliance with the manufacturer's safety recommendations. The bang stick should be discharged below the waterline when killing an alligator to reduce the potential for aerial dispersal of bullet and bone fragments. Keep in mind that the alligator must be attached to a restraining line using methods such as those describe above before it is legal to use a bang stick to kill an alligator. **Because it is difficult to ensure that all of the shot is removed from the alligator meat during processing, some alligator meat processors may not accept alligator carcasses if the alligator was killed with a bang stick using a shotshell.**

**** WARNING ****

A bang stick is a firearm under the laws of Florida, and should be treated at all times with the respect due such a device. While these materials are offered to familiarize participants with the appropriate and safe use of a bang stick, the Commission cannot warrant that such use will be safe under all circumstances, nor is this brief introduction intended as a substitute for the degree of experience and knowledge necessary to safely utilize such a device. Improper use of a bang stick, as with any firearm, can result in serious personal injury or death. In the event you choose to utilize a bang stick to harvest alligators, you should select a model that the manufacturer deems appropriate for such use, and should at all times comply with manufacturer safety recommendations and specifications for use.

Capture Method: Several methods are used to attach a restraining line to an alligator quarry. Individual trappers have their favored methods that work best for them; however, there is no "best" method. There are a few common steps in all effective hunting techniques. Alligators are invariably hunted after dark (although some trappers use snatch-hooks on submerging animals during twilight hours). Alligators are located at night by their reflective eye-shine that is a characteristic red glow. Alligators should be approached quietly keeping the beam of the spotlight directly in or just above their eyes. The restraining line can be attached using the trapper's preference of the above techniques. Pulling too hard on the restraining line (except with snatch-hooks) will often cause it to pull loose. The alligator should be retrieved with moderate pressure applied to the line. A snare should be cautiously attached to the alligator when it is adjacent to the boat. It is best to use a snare that has been attached to a pole with a rubber band or piece of tape so that it will "break-away" upon pulling it secure around the animal's neck. The animal will calm after it is tired from struggling against the snare rope. When calm, the animal is killed by lowering the head beneath the water and discharging a bang stick at the base of the skull. The bang stick should be aimed at the brain, angled slightly forward from the rear of the skull. The improper placement and discharge of the bang stick can occasionally only knock the alligator temporarily unconscious. Never, therefore, assume that any alligator is dead. Carefully pull the alligators snout up against the side of the boat (to the edge of the gunnel), press the top of the snout closed with a stick to secure. Never place your hand or foot next to an alligators jaw because they can snap sideways very quickly and cause serious injury. A nylon or jute rope snare (tossed or guided by a stick rather than your hand) can be used to temporarily secure the jaw. Many trappers use large electrical ties; however, these can easily slip off the tapered snout (as can the rope snare or any material). The jaw should finally be secured with several wraps of high quality duck-tape or electrical tape. The spinal cord should be severed at the base of the skull before placing the alligator in the bottom of the boat. Remember, the jaws should always remain taped shut when handling or transporting an "apparently" dead alligator. **NEVER ASSUME AN ALLIGATOR IS DEAD AND DOES NOT NEED TO BE SECURED PROPERLY.**

NOTE: IT IS NOT LEGAL TO USE BAITED HOOKS, GIG-EQUIPPED BANG STICKS, OR FIREARMS TO TAKE ALLIGATORS DURING THE STATEWIDE HARVEST.

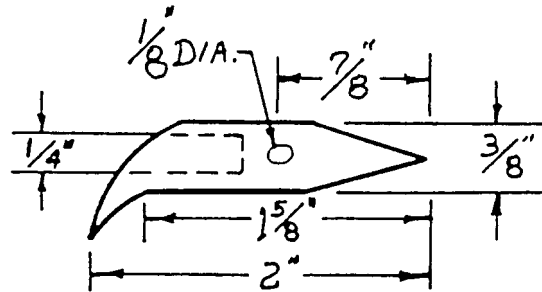
TECHNIQUES FOR KILLING AN ALLIGATOR HUMANELY

Humane Killing: *Commission rule requires that all alligators taken during the statewide harvest must be killed immediately. Participants in the statewide alligator harvest are directly responsible for complying with this requirement. Participants also have an ethical obligation to ensure that alligators are killed in a humane manner that results in immediate loss of consciousness and destruction of the brain. This is accomplished by use of a bang stick as described on the preceding page, followed by severing the spinal cord at the base of the skull and immediately inserting a small diameter metal shaft into the brain cavity to pith and destroy the brain. It is important to remember to secure the alligator's mouth as described above **before** attempting to sever the spinal cord.*

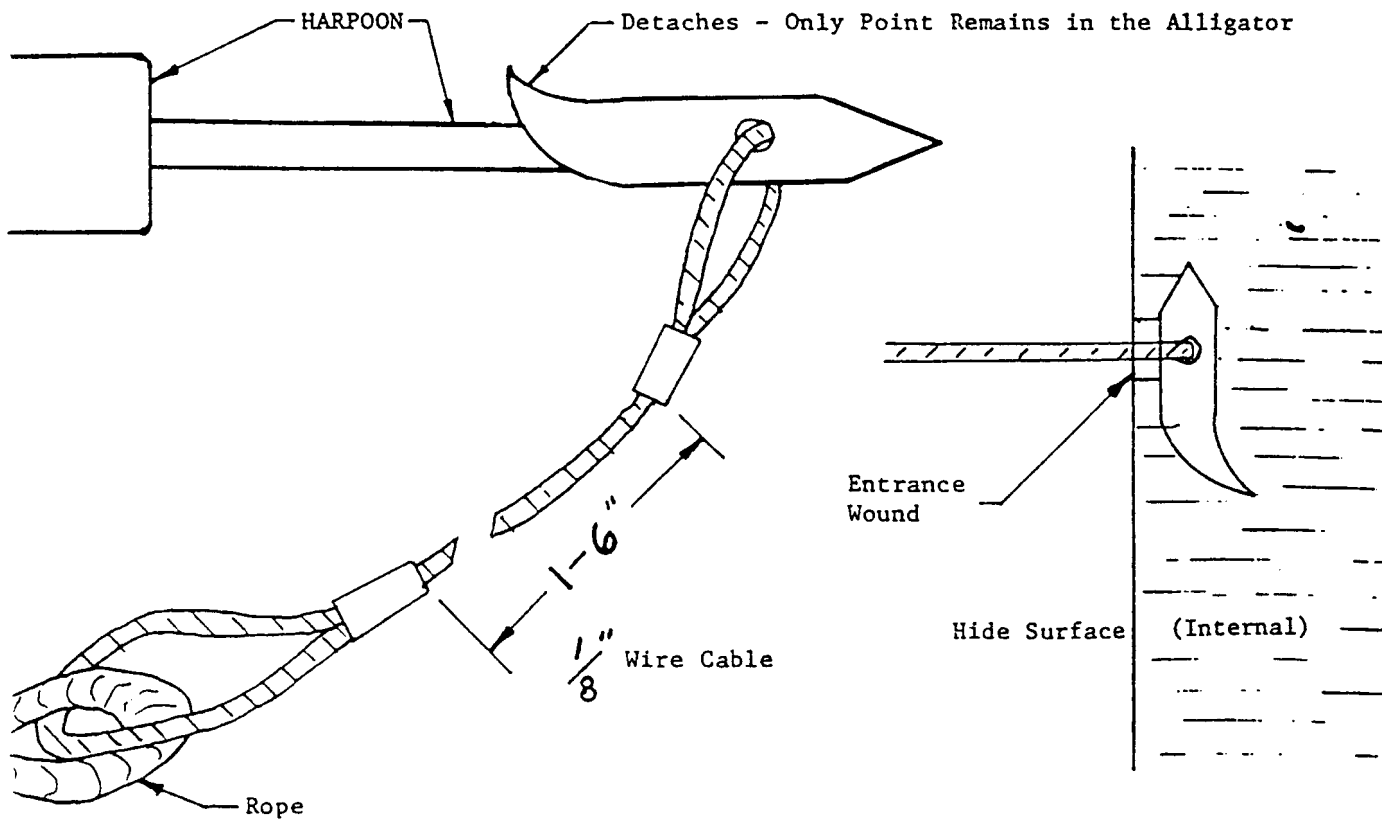
COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS

- Q. What devices can the licensed trapper or his agent use to hunt alligators?
A. Trapping with hand-held snares, harpoons, gigs, snatchhooks; baited wooden pegs (less than 2 inches), manually-operated spears, spearguns, crossbows, and bows with projectiles attached to a restraining line will be permitted. Firearms and gig-equipped bang sticks are prohibited.
- Q. What size alligators will the licensed trapper be allowed to take?
A. Only non-hatchling alligators (those with a snout to vent length greater than nine (9) inches in length) may be taken.
- Q. Can alligators captured by a licensed trapper or his trapping agent be kept alive until processing?
A. No, all alligators taken under permit must be killed and tagged immediately upon capture.
- Q. Can alligators be released after capture?
A. No, all alligators must be killed immediately upon capture. Removing capture devices from alligators can lead to their ultimate death, there fore you should only attempt capture for those alligators that you wish to take.
- Q. Can I use firearms on private lands with a county-wide permit?
A. No, the use of firearms is prohibited regardless of where you hunt.

DIAGRAM OF COMMONLY USED HARPOON POINT



3/8" Round Stock
Butt Angled & Flared



Alligators harbor a very infectious bacteria in their mouths that requires immediate and special treatment if you are bitten. The following article is provided to inform you about this bacteria, the seriousness of alligator bites, and the importance of receiving treatment if bitten.

Alligator bites and related infections

A. Clark Raynor, M.D.; Hal G. Bingham, M.D.; H. Hollis Caffee, M.D. and Paul Dell, M.D.

ABSTRACT: *Two cases of serious alligator attacks and injuries are described. With the return of alligators in increasing numbers and man's continued encroachment on the natural habitat and environment, alligator attacks appear to be increasing. Certainly, one would be well advised to avoid provoking the alligator and treat the animal with cautious respect. A gram negative organism, *Aeromonas hydrophila*, which is endemic in Florida's lakes and ponds, and especially eutropic areas, has been described and should be considered in alligator bites and other water related injuries.*

Alligator bites are infrequent but reports in the literature^{1,2} are increasing. An alligator may bite at random but usually it is in courtship or an attempt is being made to protect its young.^{3,4} The two cases reported in this paper may have been from attacks when the alligator was attempting to protect its young. One attack occurred near a backyard golf course pond and the other in a university owned and operated lake. Both attacks involved the upper extremities and the patients saved themselves by fighting back either with their contralateral upper extremity or both lower extremities. Both cases also cultured *Aeromonas hydrophila* which is found frequently in eutropic lakes and ponds and may cause serious or fatal infections unless recognized and treated appropriately.

The Authors

A. CLARK RAYNOR, M.D.; HAL G. BINGHAM, M.D.; H. HOLLIS CAFFEE, M.D.; PAUL DELL, M.D.

Dr. Raynor is in the private practice of plastic and reconstructive surgery at Stuart. Dr. Bingham is Professor of Surgery (Plastic), Dr. Caffee, Associate Professor of Surgery (Plastic), and Dr. Dell, Associate Professor of Surgery (Orthopedics) at the University of Florida Medical Center in Gainesville.

Report of Cases • Case 1.—The 20-year-old, white, male college student sustained severe wounds of the right upper extremity from an alligator who attacked him three or four times as he attempted to swim out to a capsized boat in Lake Wauberg of the University of Florida. The patient was rescued by a nearby sailboat crew and subsequently brought to Shands Hospital about five miles away.

He was stabilized in the emergency room and the initial evaluation demonstrated a completely avascular right hand that remained attached to the forearm by a few flexor tendons, median nerve, and ulnar artery and nerve. The distal 6-8 centimeters of the right radius and ulna just proximal to the wrist joint and overlying soft tissue were absent. He also had sustained a compound-comminuted fracture of the distal half of the humerus just to the supracondylar region with open skin and muscle over 5-6 centimeters with bone protruding (Figs. 1, 2, 3).

Debridement of nonviable forearm muscle, skin, and tendons was carried out initially by the Plastic Surgery Service. The distal radial metaphyseal fragment was approximated to the remaining diaphysis and reduction maintained with an external fixator by the Orthopedic Service. The

Reprinted from
The Journal of the Florida Medical Association
70:107-110 (Feb.) 1983



Fig. 1.—X-ray of right hand with transected and dislocated distal radius and ulna.



Fig. 2.—X-ray of right hand in lateral projection with dislocated and absent distal radius and ulna.

humeral fracture was irrigated and debrided and alignment maintained by traction through an olecranon pin following revascularization of the hand (Figs. 4, 5).

Vein grafts were harvested from the dorsum of the right foot and microvascular reapproximation of the radial artery with vein graft interposition was accomplished. The ulnar artery did not demonstrate flow until the radial artery was revascularized. Upon completion of the artery revascularization, the hand improved in color and temperature. Vein reconstitution was next accomplished on the volar side of the wrist with two vein grafts. Flow was demonstrated in both veins before closure of the soft tissue in a circumferential manner with the remaining distal and proximal tissue.

Postoperatively, the patient did well with adequate vascular flow to the hand. Gram negative rod organisms grew out in culture and isolation demonstrated *Pseudomonas*, *Serratia*, and *Aeromonas hydrophila*.⁵ The patient had been placed on Kefzol and tobramycin which appeared to give satisfactory coverage. Hyperbaric oxygenation was considered for treatment of possible anaerobic organisms but none grew on culture.

A second-look operation was done six days later and although there was some drainage, no evidence of induration, cellulitis, or gas was seen. At approximately ten weeks post-injury, there is little roentgenographic evidence of bony healing of both the radius and humerus.

Case 2.—The patient, a 71-year-old, white male, was attacked by an alligator while cleaning a ditch bank in his back yard located on the golf course in Port St. Lucie, Florida. The patient had observed the alligator in that area and, in fact, had fed it on occasions. Reportedly, some young alligators had been seen in the vicinity indicating a probable nest nearby. The attack came with lightning rapidity causing multiple lacerations of the face and neck regions with a large right frontal-parietal flap exposing the skull. The left wrist was dislocated and unstable with a near-circumferential laceration exposing the extensor and some of the flexor tendons. The extensor carpi radialis and flexor carpi ulnaris were partially transected and the extensor pollicis longus was completely avulsed with the muscle belly exposed in the wound (Figs. 6,7). The remaining

extensor tendons were redundant from the stretch of the hand.

Fortunately, the patient had the forethought to gouge the alligator's eyes with his right hand while the left hand was being held in the alligator's mouth, facilitating release and escape into his yard.

Following appropriate resuscitative measures in the emergency room at Martin Memorial Hospital, the patient underwent debridement and closure of multiple facial wounds with open reduction, debridement and closure of the left wrist injury. On the fifth postoperative day, a wound infection was noted underlying the dorsal skin which cultured *Aeromonas hydrophila* and *Enterobacter*.

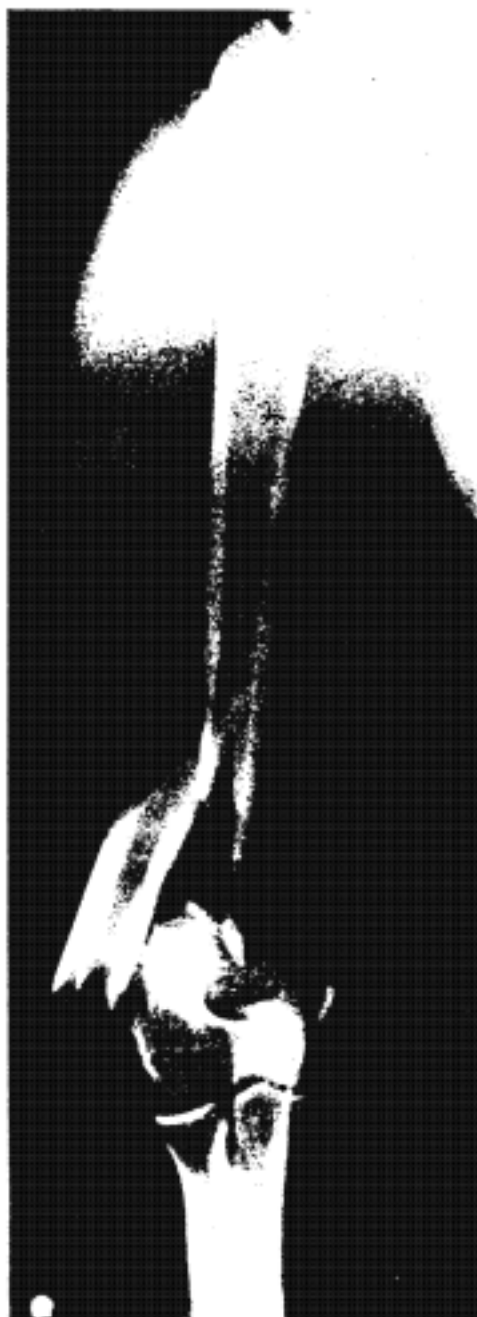


Fig. 3.—X-ray of distal right humerus comminuted just proximal to the epicondyle.



Fig. 4.—Replanted right hand—approximately six weeks post-bite.



Fig. 5.—Replanted right hand—demonstrating the Hoffman apparatus approximating the proximal carpal bones to the radius.

Continuous catheter irrigation with gentamycin solution as well as intravenous gentamycin therapy was instituted for six days with marked improvement (Fig. 8). Edema and stiffness of the joints proved to be difficult problems necessitating physical therapy, Jobst insufflation treatments, appliances, splints, and Jobst glove to rehabilitate the hand.

Approximately two months following the injury, the patient underwent intravenous Solu-Medrol therapy under tourniquet control with manipulation of the joints. Marked improvement in the edema and range of motion followed and at five months post-injury, satisfactory function was noted with approximately 15 degrees of limitation in MP extension and near normal PIP function. Wrist extension was limited to 15-20 degrees but was pain-free. The patient ultimately was able to return to playing golf but left the yard work to more qualified individuals.

Discussion • The alligator population in the Sun Belt has varied over the years, depending upon state law and permission to hunt them. In Florida, a "come-back" has been witnessed in alligators because of restricted hunting laws. More recently



Fig. 6.—Dislocated and unstable left hand with extensive lacerations and avulsions.



Fig. 7.—X-ray of left hand showing dislocation and angulation.

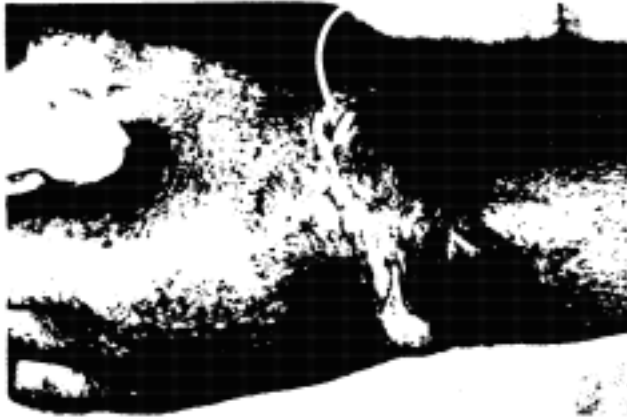


Fig. 8.—Wound infection with antibiotic catheter irrigation at 11 days post-injury.

selected individuals have been allowed to hunt in overpopulated areas. In Florida, rangers of the State Game and Wildlife Department have always been called upon to relocate alligators that have become a nuisance. It is well known that small animals are unsafe in areas where alligators are known to be.

Reported attacks seem to be increasing. Recently on the Loxahatchee River a large alligator crawled over the legs of a man to swallow a large German shepherd dog with lightning speed.⁶ Once provoked, the reptile is quite vicious and with its powerful jaws can easily transect extremities or torsos. The trick is to prevent the alligator from opening its mouth; the muscles elevating the jaw are weak. When alligators are on display, the "caretakers" make a special point of approximating the jaws of the animal by grasping them with their fists. They also avoid the powerful tail which can lash or whip around with significant force.

The micro organisms that grow in a gator's mouth are typically gram negative belonging to the salmonella species or a marine organism called *Aeromonas hydrophila*.^{7,8} Other organisms cultured yielded *Clostridium* species, enterococci and *Citrobacter*.⁹

In studies on reptiles, the *Aeromonas* is found to be endemic in alligators' mouths and surrounding waters, but usually causes little harm unless their environment changes. Salmonellosis is usually subclinical in reptiles and probably is saprophytic with 94% of all reptiles harboring salmonella. When the environment does change, such as eutrophication of lakes and ponds with low dissolved oxygen content and enriched organic waste, these *Aeromonas* organisms which are considered part of the normal flora of most water systems become pathogenic for both warm and cold blooded vertebrates.¹⁰ Although infections caused by *Aeromonas hydrophila* are commonplace among

fish and amphibians, this organism is not commonly appreciated as being a significant human pathogen. *Aeromonas* infections have followed injuries incurred in fresh and salt water and also alligator bites.^{11,12} The gram negative organism has many morphologic biochemical similarities to the Enterobacteriaceae, especially *Serratia* and *Escherichia coli*. The *Aeromonas* species are members of the vibrionaceae family and are facultative anaerobic asporogenous flagellative gram negative rods.¹⁴

Aeromonas infection may present as bullae with areas of erythema and cellulitis at the site of injury and even distant sites. Large areas of necrosis rapidly develop in these areas with progressive cutaneous and subcutaneous necrosis and separation. This organism is reported to have been responsible for many severe infections after the commercial jet plane crash in the Florida Everglades. Antibiotic therapy should include an aminoglycoside if *Aeromonas* is suspected. Though uncommon, another organism that presents with almost identical clinical picture of infection is the noncholera vibrio species, particularly *Vibrio vulnificus* and *Vibrio alginolyticus*, which are usually found in the coastal marine environment.¹⁵

References

1. Hines, T.C. and Keenlyne, K.D.: Alligator Attacks on Humans in Florida, Annual of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Casper, Wyoming, S.E. Assoc. of Game and Fish Commission, 11th Conf. p. 358, 1976.
2. Hines, T.C. and Keenlyne, K.D.: Two Incidents of Alligator Attacks on Humans in Florida. Am. Soc. Ichthyologists & Herpetologists, COPEIA 4:736 (Nov.) 1977.
3. Porter, K.P.: Herpetology, Chapter XII, Reproductive Adaptations of Reptiles Philadelphia, W.B. Saunders Co., 1972.
4. Goin, C.L. and Goin, O.B.: Introduction to Herpetology San Francisco, W.H. Freeman, 1962.
5. Gordon, R.W., Hagen, T.C., Esch, G.W., and Fiermans, C.G.: Isolation of *Aeromonas hydrophila* from American Alligator, *Alligator mississippiensis*, J. Wildlife Dis. 15:139, 1979.
6. English, M.: Eating Dog Was Big George's Big Mistake. The Jupiter Courier-Journal, A-1, July, 1982.
7. Chishti, R.J. and Sundberg, J.P.: Salmonellosis in Reptiles: A Review, Am. J. Epidemiol. 113:494, 1981.
8. Marcus, L.C.: Infectious Diseases of Reptiles, J. Am. Veterinary M.A. 159:1626, 1971.
9. Doering, E.J., Pitts, C.T., Rambo, W.M., and Breddem, C.B. (eds.): Alligator Bite, JAMA 218:255, 1971.
10. Shotts, E.B. Jr., Gaines, J.L. Jr., Martin, L., and Prestwood, A.K.: *Aeromonas* Induced Deaths Among Fish and Reptiles in Eutrophic Inland Lake, J. Am. Veterinary M.A. 161:603, 1972.
11. Fulghum, D.D., Linton, W.R. Jr., and Teplin, D.: Fetal *Aeromonas hydrophila* Infection of Skin, Surg. M.J., 71:739, 1978.
12. Hanson, P.G., Stanridge, J., Jarrett, F., and Maki, D.G.: Fresh Water Wound Infection Due to *Aeromonas hydrophila*, JAMA 238:1053, 1977.
13. Rosenthal, S.G., Burnhart, H.E., and Phillips, J.A. III: *Aeromonas hydrophila* Wound Infection, Plast. Reconstr. Surg. 53:77, 1974.
14. Buchanan, R.E. and Gibbons, N.E. (eds.): Bergey's Manual of Determinative Bacteriology (8th ed), Baltimore, Williams and Wilkins Co., 1974.
15. Blake, P.A., Weaver, R.E., and Hollis, D.G.: Diseases of Humans (Other than Cholera) Caused by Vibrios. An. Rev. Microbiol. 34:341, 1980.

● Dr. Bingham, Div. Plastic Surgery, Shands Hospital, Gainesville 32601.

BOAT SAFETY AND REGISTRATION
CHAPTERS 327 AND 328, FLORIDA STATUTES

All vessels operated in the State of Florida must comply with the requirements of chapters 327 and 328 of the Florida Statutes. These statutes adopt all federal boating safety regulations.

The possession of licenses or permits issued by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to take or possess alligators **does not** relieve any boat or operator from compliance with the boat safety and registration statutes.

Information on this subject is available in the form of "Recreational Boating Safety Information Booklet." You may contact the Commission's Regional Office in your area if you would like to receive this booklet or have questions regarding boating safety or boat registration requirements. Information can also be found on the Commission website at: <http://myfwc.com/law/boatsafe/> .

NORTHWEST REGION:

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
3911 Highway 2321
Panama City, FL 32409-1658
(850) 265-3677

NORTHEAST REGION:

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
1239 S.W. 10th Street
Ocala, FL 34474-2797
(352) 732-1225

NORTH CENTRAL REGION:

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Route 7, Box 440
Lake City, FL 32055
(904) 758-0525

SOUTHWEST REGION:

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
3900 Drane Field Road
Lakeland, FL 33811-1299
(863) 648-3203

SOUTH REGION:

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
8535 Northlake Blvd.
West Palm Beach, FL 33412
(561) 625-5122

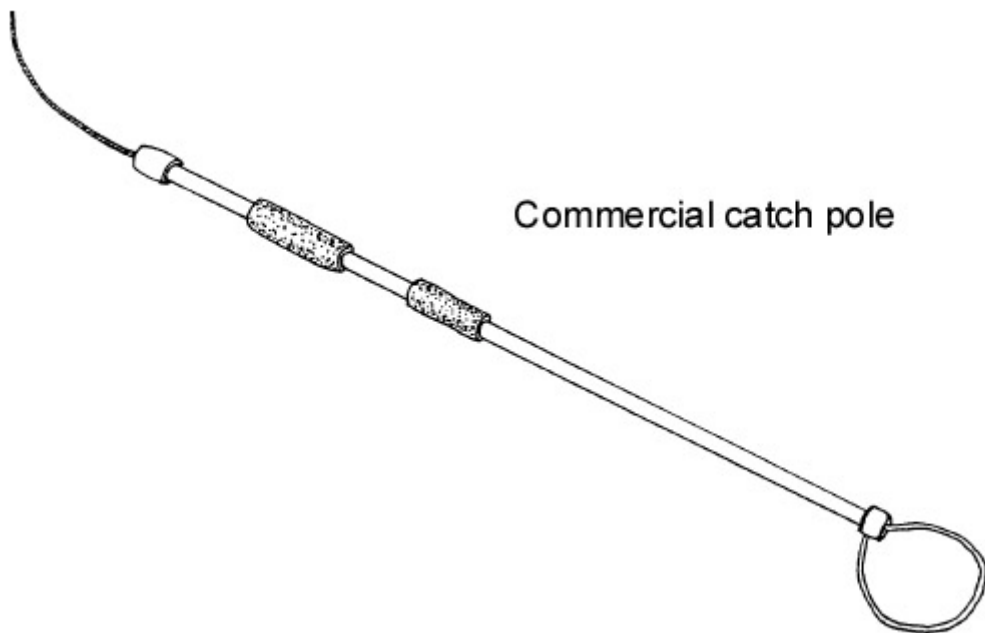
SECTION THREE: HARVESTING YOUR ALLIGATOR

✓ REQUIREMENTS

✓ TIPS

✓ QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

✓ HARVEST REPORT FORM



REQUIREMENTS

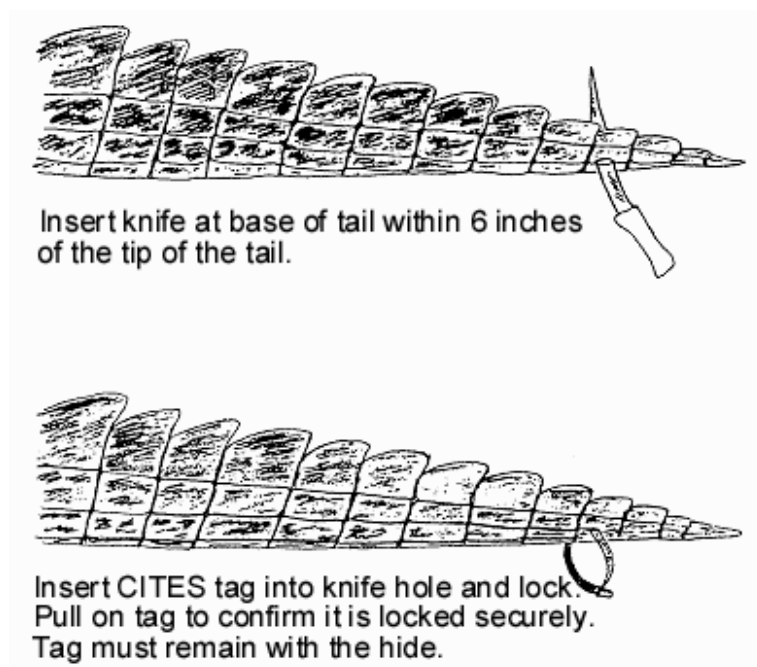
- ✓ You must be in possession of your trapping license, permit, and CITES tags while engaging in hunting activities.
 - ✓ You are not allowed to search for alligators prior to legal hunting hours if you have harvest equipment in your possession. **Legal hunting hours are from ½ hour before sunset through ½ hour after sunrise.**
 - ✓ Alligators may only be taken from ½ hour before sunset on September 1 through ½ hour after sunrise September 8 (period 1), from ½ hour before sunset on September 8 through ½ hour after sunrise September 15 (period 2), from ½ hour before sunset on September 15 through ½ hour after sunrise September 22 (period 3), and from ½ hour before sunset on September 22 through ½ hour after sunrise October 1 (period 4). Participants are assigned to a period based on availability and on the order of preference that they indicated on their application. Participants are informed of their harvest period assignment on their notification postcard and on their harvest permit. All participants also will be allowed to trap alligators from ½ hour before sunset October 1 through ½ hour after sunrise October 8.
 - ✓ Only non-hatchling alligators may be taken (those with a snout to vent length greater than nine (9) inches, approximately 18 inches total length).
 - ✓ Alligators may only be taken in the area specified in the alligator harvest permit.
 - ✓ Alligators shall be killed immediately upon capture.
 - ✓ Immediately upon killing the alligator, a CITES tag, and mercury tag if issued, must be locked through the skin of the carcass within six (6) inches of the tip of the tail. The tag(s) must remain attached to the alligator hide at all times until tanned, taxidermy mounted, or exported from the state. No person shall possess any untagged alligator hide.
 - ✓ An alligator harvest report form (FWC Form 1001AT, supplied with your permit) must be completed by the permittee within 24 hours of taking each alligator and prior to the transfer to a permitted alligator processing facility. A copy of the alligator harvest report form must accompany the alligator carcass until processing.
 - ✓ The permittee shall submit a legible copy of the alligator harvest report form to the Commission's office at: **2590 Executive Center Circle, Suite 200, Tallahassee, FL 32301** for receipt no later than October 22. **Permittees SHOULD NOT rely on processors to forward the harvest report form to the Commission; it is the responsibility of the trapper to return the form to the address above.**
 - ✓ Unused alligator CITES tags must be returned to the above address by the permittee to the Commission by October 22. Participants will be issued a \$10 refund for each returned tag. **To avoid damage to your package and ensure receipt of its contents, please use a cardboard or padded envelope when returning your unused tags.**
 - ✓ The permittee is solely responsible for the return of harvest report forms and tags.
- IMPORTANT! Permits may be denied to applicants who have previously failed to return unused CITES tags and completed alligator harvest report forms.
- ✓ Please review Rule 68A-25.042, F.A.C., in Section Six on page 35 for other rule requirements.

TIPS

- ✓ It is difficult to cut through the alligator's hide, so take your time and be careful not to cut yourself. Also, be sure to clamp your CITES tag across the underside of the tail to avoid jeopardizing the ability to skin the hide.
- ✓ When you return to the boat ramp, you should fill out a harvest report form. Please be sure to read and follow the directions carefully and completely. A sample of this form and directions is provided on pages 23 and 24.
- ✓ To maintain meat and hide quality, take necessary steps to cool your harvested alligator to 45 degrees Fahrenheit within four (4) hours after killing.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS

- Q. Is there any required paperwork to be completed once the licensed trapper harvests an alligator?
- A. Yes, an alligator harvest report form must be completed by the licensed trapper within 24 hours of taking each alligator and prior to the transfer to a permitted processing facility. A copy of the form shall accompany the alligator hide at all times. The permittee shall submit a legible copy of the alligator harvest report form to the **Bureau of Licensing and Permitting, 2590 Executive Center Circle, Suite 200, Tallahassee, FL 32301** for receipt no later than October 22.
- Q. Who is responsible for returning unused CITES tags to the Commission following the harvest?
- A. All unused CITES tags shall be refundable and shall be returned **by the permittee** to the **Bureau of Licensing and Permitting, 2590 Executive Center Circle, Suite 200, Tallahassee, FL 32301** no later than October 22. It is a violation for any person to possess any unused CITES tag after October 22. **To avoid damage to your package and ensure receipt of its contents, please use a cardboard or padded envelope when returning your unused tags.**
- Q. Where do I tag my alligator?
- A. By rule, you must lock one of your CITES tags (and mercury tag, if issued) through the skin of the alligator carcass within six (6) inches of the tip of the tail (see diagram below).



ALLIGATOR HARVEST REPORT FORM

Carefully read instructions on reverse side prior to completing this form.
Press firmly - You are making 4 copies

Please Print or Type

SECTION A - TRAPPER

1. Name of alligator trapping licensee: _____
[Last] [First] [M.I.]
2. Alligator trapping license number: ATL - _____
3. Alligator CITES tag number: FL MISI _____ Alligator mercury tag number: MER- _____
(If issued with harvest permit)
4. Harvest date: ____ / ____ / ____
5. County: _____
6. Location: _____
7. Carcass length: _____ feet and _____ inches
8. Disposition of carcass [circle one]: Processed Discarded Transferred to: _____
9. Sex [circle one]: Male Female [Skip this line if the carcass is transferred to a processor.]
10. Meat yield: _____ lbs. [Record zero (0) here if the meat is to be processed for sale at a permitted processing facility or if the carcass is discarded and meat is not retained by anyone.]
11. The information provided in SECTION A above is correct: _____
Signature of Licensed Trapper Date

SECTION B - PROCESSOR

1. Name of receiving processing facility permittee: _____
[Last] [First] [M.I.]
2. Processing facility permit number: APP - _____
3. Signature verifies receipt of the above carcass: _____
Signature of Licensed Processor Date
4. Disposition of carcass [circle one]: Processed Discarded Transferred to: _____
5. Sex [circle one]: Male Female
6. Meat yield from alligator with tag number listed in **A3** above: _____ lbs.
7. The information provided in sections 4 through 7 are correct: _____
Signature of Licensed Processor Date

FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:

Law Enforcement Control Number: _____ Region: _____

WHITE - Commission

YELLOW - Regional Coordinator

PINK - Processing facility

GOLD - Trapper

FWC FORM 1001AT

INSTRUCTIONS

How to submit copies of the Alligator Harvest Report Form

- WHITE** **Statewide Trappers:** This copy must be forwarded to the Bureau of Licensing and Permitting, 2590 Executive Center Circle, Suite 200, Tallahassee, FL 32301, no later than October 22 of the calendar year of harvest. *Statewide trappers SHOULD NOT rely on processors to forward the harvest report form to the Commission; it is the responsibility of the trapper to return the form to the address above.*
- YELLOW** **For Nuisance-Alligator Trappers only:** Return this copy, along with the WHITE copy, to the regional nuisance-alligator program coordinator at the end of the month during which the alligator was harvested.
- PINK** Receiving processing facility permittee completes **SECTION B** and retains this copy for one year, as required by rule.
- GOLD** Alligator trapping licensee retains this copy.

SECTION A

This section must be completed by the trapper within 24 hours of taking an alligator from the wild and prior to the transfer of the alligator carcass to another person or processor.

1. Provide full name (last name first) of the alligator trapping licensee.
2. Give the alligator trapping license number.
3. Record the number of the CITES tag that is attached to the hide and, if attached, the number of the mercury tag.
4. Date the alligator was taken.
5. County where the alligator was taken.
6. General location from which the alligator was taken (that is, the name of the lake or river, the name of the harvest unit if taken in the statewide harvest, or the property name if taken on private lands).
7. Measure carcass length along the underside in a straight line from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail. Record length to the nearest inch.
8. Circle AProcessed® if the hide or meat was removed from the carcass for personal consumption (record the weight of the meat in 10.). Circle ADiscarded® if the carcass was discarded without being skinned or removing any meat. If the carcass was transferred to a processor or another person, for example, an alligator trapping agent, enter the processor-s or person-s name in the blank provided.
9. Indicate sex of the alligator, if known. Skip if carcass is transferred to a processor.
10. Record total pounds of meat produced and packaged from the carcass. Record zero (0) here if the meat is to be processed for sale at a permitted processing facility or if the carcass is discarded and meat is not retained by anyone.
11. Provide the licensed alligator trapper's signature to confirm the information provided is correct.

Alligator meat that is not processed in a permitted processing facility under Rule 68A-25.052, F.A.C., and is kept for personal consumption may not be sold, and such meat must be packaged and labeled in indelible ink with the CITES tag number and license holder's name.

SECTION B

This section must be completed **only** if the carcass is transferred to a licensed and permitted alligator processing facility. Note that Rule 68A-25.052, F.A.C., prohibits the sale of any alligator meat not packaged in such a facility.

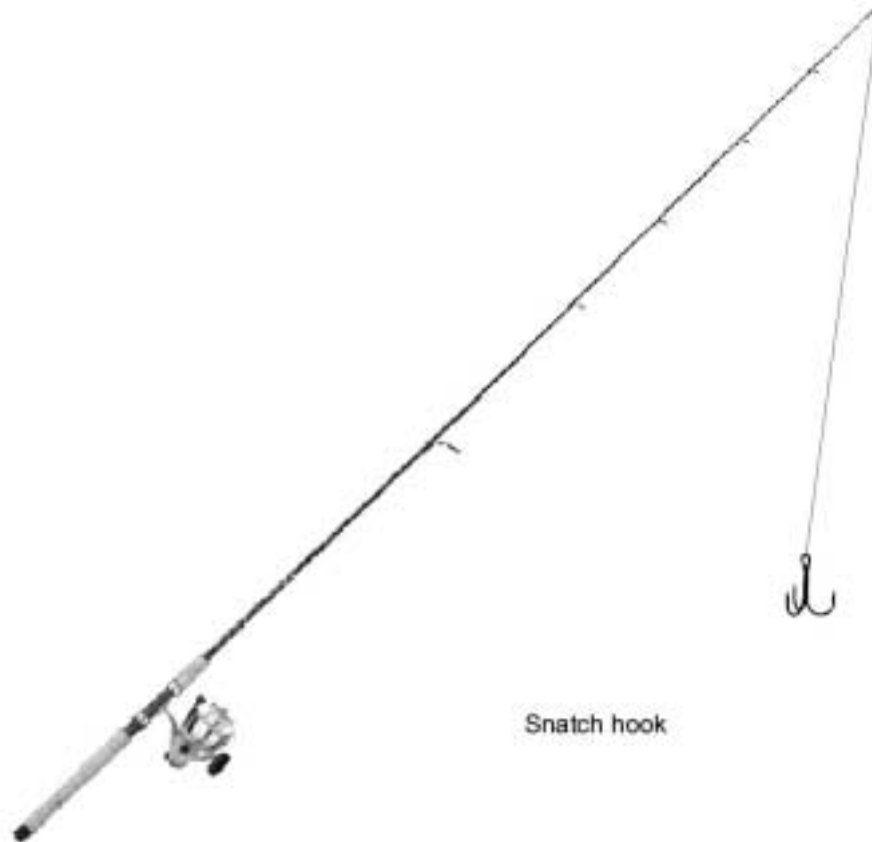
1. Provide full name (last name first) of the alligator processing facility permittee.
2. Give the processing facility permit number.
3. Provide the licensed alligator processor's signature to confirm receipt of the alligator carcass.
4. Indicate disposition of carcass. *Note: Alligator processors may transfer legally acquired, tagged, unskinned alligator carcasses and skinned alligator carcasses with the CITES tag number recorded on an attached tag to other permitted processors. However, alligator meat may only be sold if processed from alligator carcasses skinned in a permitted alligator processing facility. Receipt of the carcass shall be documented on a separate Alligator Harvest Report Form in Sections A-3 and B-1 through B-3, and the receiving processor shall complete sections B-4 through B-7 upon processing. A copy of the Alligator Harvest Report Form completed by the processor shall accompany the carcass until processing.*
5. Indicate sex of the alligator.
6. Indicate number of pounds of meat packaged from the alligator with the tag number listed above.
7. Provide the licensed alligator processor's signature to confirm information provided is correct.

SECTION FOUR: PROCESSING YOUR ALLIGATOR

✓ REQUIREMENTS

✓ QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

✓ LIST OF PROCESSORS



REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Any person may possess unskinned alligator carcasses with CITES tags attached, and skinned alligator carcasses with the CITES tag number and, if applicable, mercury tag number recorded on an attached tag.
- ✓ An alligator harvest report form must be completed prior to transferring the carcass to a processor. The processor must sign the form to indicate receipt of the carcass and shall further complete the form upon processing the carcass to indicate the amount of meat packaged. You may allow the processor to submit your harvest report form, **but the permittee retains the responsibility for submitting the harvest report form to the Commission.**
- ✓ **The sale of meat from alligators taken from the Holey Land and the Everglades and Francis S. Taylor Wildlife Management Areas is prohibited. If the meat is not discarded, meat packages must be permanently and visibly labeled "NOT FOR SALE, Recommend: NOT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION."**
- ✓ All alligator meat that is not discarded and not processed for sale shall be packaged and labeled to indicate the CITES tag number and license holder's name in indelible ink on each package.
- ✓ Skinned alligator carcasses may only be sold if skinned in a permitted alligator processing facility and alligator meat may only be sold if processed from carcasses skinned in a permitted alligator processing facility and packaged in such a facility.
- ✓ Meat processed for sale must be packaged in a sealed, tamper-proof package (a package that must be permanently and noticeably altered if opened to remove or add meat), and that each package must be permanently labeled to indicate the name of the processor processing the alligator(s), the CITES tag number(s) from the alligator(s) from which the meat was taken, the date packaged, and the number of pounds of meat enclosed.
- ✓ The feet, viscera, or skeletal parts may be retained or transferred provided that all transfers, with the exception of retail sales to the consumer, must be documented in writing to indicate the kind and quantity of items and date transferred and the name and address of each recipient, and such records must be maintained for a period of one year.
- ✓ Manufactured goods wholly or partly composed of alligator hide, organs, teeth, or skull, or other skeletal material may only be sold in accordance with the following:
 - documentary evidence of the source of acquisition of the product held for sale must be maintained until the products are sold.
 - no person may sell a product manufactured in the form of a stuffed baby crocodilian less than three feet in length as measured from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail.
- ✓ Please review Rules 68A-25.042 and 68A-25.052, F.A.C., in Section Six on pages 35 and 38, respectively, for other rule requirements.

PROCESSING YOUR ALLIGATOR

- ✓ Skinning and processing your own alligator can be very difficult for a novice. Therefore, we have provided a listing of alligator meat processors that you may wish to contact. Also, if you wish to sell your meat, your alligator must be processed at a permitted facility by a licensed processor and the meat packaged in accordance with Commission rules in such a facility.
- ✓ Becoming a licensed, permitted processor requires either getting approval of a currently permitted facility for your use, or having your own facility approved. Note that getting your facility approved requires an inspection by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and generally takes at least six (6) weeks.
- ✓ If you are not familiar with processing alligators, we encourage you to attend one of our training and orientation seminars which will introduce you to alligator processing.
- ✓ Because it is difficult to ensure that all of the shot is removed from the alligator meat during processing, some alligator meat processors may not accept alligator carcasses if the alligator was killed with a bang stick using a shotshell. If you plan on using shotshell bang sticks and selling your carcass to a processor, we encourage you to contact them ahead of time to avoid any problems.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS

- Q. What can the permittee do with the meat and hides from his or her alligators?
- A. Alligator meat may be processed by any licensed trapper, farmer, or their licensed agent(s) if the meat is kept for personal consumption and not sold. If the permittee wishes to sell the meat from his/her harvested alligators, he/she must have the alligators processed at a licensed alligator processing facility. **The sale of meat from alligators taken from the Holey Land and the Everglades and Francis S. Taylor harvest units is prohibited.** A list of licensed processing facilities and their locations is provided on page 29.
- Q. If the licensed trapper sells alligators to a licensed processing facility, who is responsible for meat records?
- A. Once the proper portion of the alligator harvest report form has been completed and the alligators are transferred to the licensed facility, the facility owner assumes responsibility for the alligators, meat, and hides.
- Q. Can a licensed trapper sell the meat from legally harvested alligators?
- A. Yes, but only if the meat is processed and packaged in a permitted alligator processing facility.
- Q. Is the licensed processor required to keep records of alligator meat sold?
- A. Yes, with the exception of retail sales to the consumer, he must keep a record of the name of the seller and buyer, date of sale, and amount sold.
- Q. Can the licensed trapper sell alligator meat outside of Florida?
- A. Yes, if it has been processed in a permitted facility in accordance with labeling and packaging requirements.
- Q. Can the licensed trapper keep the skull from alligators they take?
- A. The skulls and other skeletal parts of alligators may be kept or they may be transferred or sold. Records must be kept indicating to whom skulls and/or other skeletal parts were transferred.

ALLIGATOR MEAT PROCESSORS*

All American Gator Products		1883 S.W. 31st Ave.	Pembroke Park, FL 33009	954-894-8003
A & M Gators		480 S. Busby Terr.	Inverness, FL 34450	843-361-7721
Anderson, Scott	Cypress Creek Farms, Inc.	P. O. Box 1071	Starke, FL 32091	904-964-3339
Bass, Robert A.	Whites Meats	18120 S.E. 243 rd St.	Hawthorne, FL 32640	352-481-4280
Boston, Jr., James O.	Boston's Processing Facility	Elder Rd. & I-4	Lake Monroe, FL 32771	407-322-9238
Calcaterra, Paul	Paul Calcaterra Farms	33285 Highway 441 N.	Okeechobee, FL 34972	863-763-1656
Cassels, Douglas R.		U.S. Hwy. 301	Lochloosa, FL 32640	352-481-4805
Clabrook Farms		26205 E. Hwy. 50	Christmas, FL 32709	407-774-1249
Collins, Robert W.	Collins Gator Products	320 Ketch Road	St. Cloud, FL 34771	407-892-7006
Douglas Jr., Jimmy	J.L.'s Alligator Processing	C.R. 468 & 503	Coleman, FL 33521	352-748-5816
Douglas Sr., Jimmy		6088 E. SR 44	Wildwood, FL 34785	352-748-0437
Dunaway, Grant	Dragon Farm, Inc.	999 Morris Taylor Rd.	Felda, FL 33930	863-675-7492
Dunaway, Robert Dale		999 Morris Taylor Rd.	Felda, FL 33930	863-675-7800
Fagan, J.M.	Fagan Alligator Products	15911 Lake Iola Road	Dade City, FL 33525	352-588-3337
Froehlich, II, Edwin	Froelich's Gator Farm	26256 East Highway 50	Christmas, FL 32709	407-568-5104
Gatorama		U.S. Highway 27	Palmdale, FL 33944	863-675-0623
Godwin's Gatorland		14501 S. Orange Blossom	Orlando, FL 32837	407-855-5496
Gore, Jr., Thomas W.	Tom Gore Alligators	4847 Selvitz Rd.	Ft. Pierce, FL 34981	561-464-4299
Haley, Michael S.		4320 Clark Street	Penney Farms, FL 32079	904-284-8080
Hunter, Ronald (Tony)	Hunter's Alligator Products	Route 1, Box 2845-M	Havana, FL 32333	850-576-8850
Kent, Sr., James M.	Kent's Fur & Seafood	267 Marlin Street	Port St. Joe, FL 32456	850-229-6682
Kinnamon, Peter L.		8736 Longhorn Dr.	Lakeland, FL 33809	863-858-7681
Lightsey, Stewart		700 N.E. 4th St.	Okeechobee, FL 34972	863-467-5787
Lucas, Curtis Eugene		1881 Stone Rd.	Pierson, FL 32180	386-749-2452
Padgett, Norman E.		2689 N. Kirk Rd.	West Palm Beach, FL 33406	561-968-1193
Parker Island Gator Farm and Processing		1755 County Road 29	Lake Placid, FL 33862	863-465-3161
Parlier, Terry K.	Parlier Wildlife Processing	10701 Fox Hole Rd.	Clermont, FL 34711	407-656-3723
Peterson, Roy Clayton	Roy Peterson Fish Company	365 Grand Ave.	Deland, FL 32726	386-561-7407
Regel, Wallace D.	Regel Gator Processing	810 5th Street, S.W.	Naples, FL 34117	941-455-2598
Stafford, Greg		15098 S.E. 140th Ave. Rd.	Weirsdale, FL 32195	352-821-0315
Stratton, Rufus		3151 Stratton Blvd.	St. Augustine, FL 32084	904-829-8177
Taff, Houston		854 Arran Road	Crawfordville, FL 32327	850-926-3778
Williams, David P.		18230 SE 243 Street	Hawthorne, Florida 32640	352-732-7629
Worden, Mary		Route 1, Box 109A	Clewiston, FL 33440	863-983-5437

* All processors listed have been licensed to process alligators in previous years, but please confirm with the processor of your choice that their licenses are current before entering in a contract or transferring your alligators to them.

6/16/04

SECTION FIVE: CARING FOR YOUR ALLIGATOR SKIN

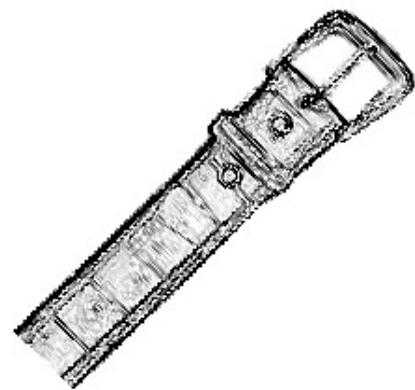
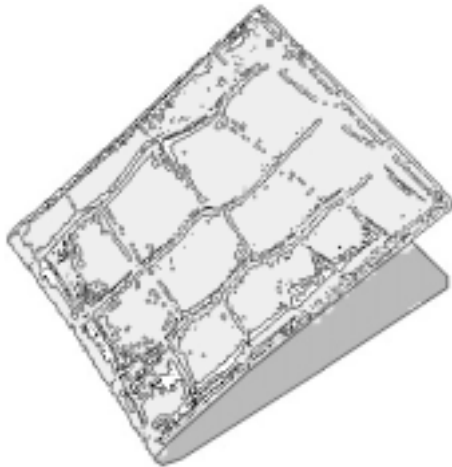
✓ **REQUIREMENTS**

✓ **TIPS**

✓ **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

✓ **SKIN CURING AND STORAGE**

✓ **LIST OF FUR AND HIDE DEALERS**



REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Alligator hides with CITES tag attached may be possessed by and transferred to any person.
- ✓ Only licensed fur and hide dealers may purchase your hide. For your convenience, we have included a listing of licensed dealers who you may wish to contact. You also may take your hide to a taxidermist or tannery.
- ✓ The requirement for validating all alligator hides has been eliminated. Validations were used previously by the Commission to measure hide length, collect harvest report forms, and attach CITES tags to the hides. You have been provided with CITES tags to attach to the alligator carcasses, and you should take a careful measurement of the carcass length and record this length on a harvest report form, which, by rule, you must mail to the Commission by October 22.

TIPS

- ✓ Now that you've processed your alligator, great care must be given to the skin in order to preserve its value and quality. Page 32 describes in detail how to properly prepare and store your alligator hide. Following this guidance carefully will ensure that your hide retains its value and quality.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS

- Q. To whom may the licensed trapper sell the hides from alligators he has harvested?
A. Hides may only be sold to licensed fur and hide dealers.
- Q. Can the licensed trapper keep the hide from an alligator he takes?
A. Yes, the hides of alligators may be kept for personal use.
- Q. Do I need to validate my hides?
A. No, the requirement for validating all alligator hides has been eliminated. You have been provided with CITES tags to attach to the alligator carcasses, and you should take a careful measurement of the carcass length and record this length on a harvest report form, which, by rule, you must mail to the Commission by October 22.

ALLIGATOR SKIN CURING AND STORAGE

After alligators have been skinned, the hide should be scraped thoroughly using a knife, beehive tool, or appropriate object. After scraping, salt hides with approximately one inch of white, fine grade table or mixing salt (available at most feed and seed stores). Rub salt into the hide thoroughly. Roll hides tightly and store in a cool place. After three (3) to five (5) days, repeat the salting procedure above discarding the old salt. Reroll hides tightly and band with a one-inch rubber band or other rubber tubing. Store rolled hides in a cool, dry place.

An alternative to the above curing and storage procedure is to utilize a brine solution. Many trappers have experienced alligator hide storage problems due to "red heat" or other factors which affect the value of skins. Due to market conditions and program requirements, trappers must often hold skins for extended periods of time which increases the possibility of hide quality problems developing. Although salt normally acts as a preservative which retards spoilage, some types of organisms can still persist. This is particularly true under warm, humid conditions, ideal for bacterial growth. The most common problem experienced with stored alligator hides is "red heat." It is caused by a bacteria that is salt tolerant and produces a red pigment which identifies its presence. This bacteria deteriorates the hide and connective tissue which holds the scales to the skin, causing scale slippage. When this occurs, the hide often cannot be properly tanned, and therefore, buyers may deduct 50% or more from the hide's price. In an effort to solve the problem of hide loss due to the combined effects of extended storage and "red heat," several hide curing and storage treatments were examined by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The method found to be most effective, safe, and economical, was a brine solution. Alligator hides were kept in a brine solution for up to one year without "red heat" developing. In addition, the hides remained more supple, suffered less shrinkage, and are viewed as more attractive by hide graders and buyers. For these reasons, the use of brine solutions for alligator hide storage is highly recommended.

INGREDIENTS

10 gallon covered plastic trash can

10 pounds salt

3 ounces bleach

5 gallons water

In order for brine solutions to be effective, they must be carefully prepared and maintained. A plastic or other non-corrosive covered container of sufficient size should be used. Heavy, 10 gallon plastic garbage cans and 48 quart ice chests work well for this purpose. For smaller hides, a covered plastic 5 gallon bucket can be used; just cut the brine solution formula in half. The brine solution *must* remain saturated with salt. Too little salt in solution will cause the loss of skins. Fill container half full of water, add salt, and bleach to drum and mix thoroughly. After complete mixing, a 2 or 3 inch layer of salt should remain on the bottom. The bleach will assist in keeping bacterial growth to a minimum. Alligator hides are sensitive to many chemicals which may affect the tanning process. When it comes to chemicals, more is not better. Beware: DO NOT add formaldehyde or other chemicals which may affect the hide. Hides should be properly scraped and salted with a one inch layer of salt, tightly rolled, and secured with a rubber band prior to placing in the brine. When submersing a hide in the brine, it should be rotated to allow most of the air pockets to escape. If properly salted, the layer of salt in the rolled skin will act as a wick to draw the brine solution throughout the skin. All hides should be entirely submersed in the brine at all times. Each time a hide is added to the brine, a few pounds of salt should be sprinkled over the top. This is important to maintain the saturated solution.

The brine container should be kept tightly covered to keep insects and airborne contaminants from entering. When skins are to be delivered for sale, they must be removed from the brine and entirely resalted prior to being shipped or placed in refrigeration. The brine should be discarded and a new solution made after each use. Disposal of the salt brine should be done conscientiously since it can be harmful to plants and aquatic animal life.

FUR AND HIDE DEALERS*

Alligator Trading Company	15911 Lake Iola Road	Dade City, FL 33523	352-588-2525
Aman, Wilbur G.	116 W. High Street	Perry, FL 32347	850-584-4210
B & B Taxidermy	3606 U.S. Hwy. 92 E.	Lakeland, FL 33801	863-688-2573
Bishop, Joseph	4457 N. U.S. Hwy. 17	Deland, FL 32720	386-985-2798
Borkowski, Tom	818 Busbee Ave.	Apopka, FL 32703	407-886-5991
Breedlove, Charles (Tony)	3188 S.E. CR 21-B	Melrose, FL 32666	352-475-3159
Carlton Furs	8315 Bay Lake RD.	Groveland, FL 34736	352-429-2566
Ceballos, Dale J.	6045 Oak Street	Scottsmoor, FL 32775	321-268-0817
Charni, Hamadi M.	300 W. Royal Palm Rd. #C-308	Boca Raton, FL 33432	561-416-9679
Clabrook Farms	26205 E. Hwy. 50	Christmas, FL 32709	407-774-1249
Classic Gator Farm	4524 Gun Club Rd., #210	West Palm Beach, FL 33415	561-689-2554
Clifton, George	330 Otter Blvd.	New Smyrna Beach, FL 32168	904-423-1459
Columbia Impex	6073 N.W. 167 th St., #C14	Miami, FL 33015	305-819-7116
Cypress Creek Farms	13715 N.W. C.R. 225	Starke, FL 32091	904-964-3339
Diegert, Theodore	420 Puritan Rd.	West Palm Beach, FL 33405	561-644-0976
Dunaway, Grant L.	999 Morris Taylor Rd.	Felda, FL 33930	863-675-7492
El Lagarto	3191 AE@ Rd.	Loxahatchee, FL 33470	561-793-3672
Florida Cracker Alligator Products	4010 W. Newberry Rd., D	Gainesville, FL 32607	352-372-4237
Froehlich's Gator Farm	26256 E. Hwy. 50	Christmas, FL 32709	407-568-5104
Gast, Gerrit J.	3706 Oxford St.	Ft. Myers, FL 33901	941-936-4088
Gatorama	6180 U.S. Hwy. 27	Palmdale, FL 33944	863-675-0623
Gottschalk, Jay Alan	501 Blossom Dr.	Sebring, FL 33876	863-655-5553
Griffin Taxidermy	4591 Dor-Lee Ln.	N. Fort Myers, FL 33917	941-995-3819
Hachey, Sandra	10632 Overland Trails	Polk City, FL 33868	863-984-4298
Hopkins Meat Packing	900 Michigan St.	Sanford, FL 32773	407-322-9291
J & D Taxidermy	1114 Chickasaw St.	Jupiter, FL 33458	561-746-7724
John Walker Enterprises	31011 Lorine St.	Deland, FL 32720	386-804-6877
Jones Fish House	P.O. Box 251	Canal Point, FL 33438	561-924-5789
Kent's Fur Company	267 Marlin St.	Port St. Joe, FL 32456	850-229-6682
Lake George Taxidermy	361 Lake George Rd.	Seville, FL 32190	904-749-9119
Moore, Edward	654 W. Minnesota St.	Deland, FL 32721	386-738-4312
Parker Island Processing	1775 County Road 29	Lake Placid, FL 33862	863-465-3161
Paxon, John P., Jr.	2616 N.E. 14 th Ave.	Pompano Beach, FL 33064	954-783-2499
Pelts & Skins Export, Ltd.	1310 Carroll Street	Kenner, LA 70062	504-469-9553
Richiert, Martin	6870 66 th St. N.	Pinellas Park, FL 33781	727-643-2632
Scott Lindsay Taxidermy	21158 E. Colonial Drive	Christmas, FL 32709	407-568-3602
Shayne's Taxidermy	11819 Highway 301 N.	Oxford, FL 34484	352-303-7301
Shelton= Farm	3501 Marsh Rd.	Deland, FL 32724	386-736-6748
Skin Shop USA	16914 N.E. CR 1471	Waldo, FL 32694	352-468-1548
Skins and Vintage, Inc.	130 N.E. 2 nd Street	Boca Raton, FL 33432	561-416-9679
Stull, Randy L.	9097 Carribean Drive	Pensacola, FL 32506	850-453-6235
Swampy Acres Alligator Leather	122 Karola Drive	Sebring, FL 33870	863-385-7995
Taff Fur & Alligator Product	880 Arran Rd.	Crawfordville, FL 32327	850-926-3778
West Coast Seafood	510 N.E. Waldo Rd.	Gainesville, FL 32641	352-485-2846
Wild Trader, Inc.	P.O. Box 989	Waldo, FL 32694	352-475-2986
Woolard, John W.	2025 S.W. Kanner Hwy.	Stuart, FL 34997	772-286-8132

* All dealers listed are presently licensed or have been licensed to purchase alligator hides in previous years, but please confirm with the dealer of your choice that their licenses are current before entering in a contract or selling your alligator hides to them.

6/16/04

**SECTION SIX:
ALLIGATOR REGULATIONS**

- ✓ **FOLLOWING ARE THE MORE IMPORTANT
REGULATIONS RELATED TO THE
STATEWIDE ALLIGATOR HARVEST**



68A-25.042 Regulations Governing Statewide Alligator Trapping, Permitting, Taking and Sale.

No person shall take non-hatchling alligators from the wild except as provided herein and under other applicable rules of the Commission.

(1) Establishment of alligator management units and harvest quotas:

(a) Management units comprised of specified wetlands, lakes, rivers or other water bodies that may be reasonably grouped for the purposes of study, analysis or management and that are suitable for harvest based on habitat characteristics, accessibility, and estimated alligator densities shall be established by the executive director or his designee.

(b) Annual harvest quotas for each management unit shall be established by the executive director, or his designee, and shall be based upon an evaluation of on-site habitat or population inventories for each management unit. The harvest quota for a management unit shall be based on the best estimate of the number of alligators that can be removed from the unit without long-term adverse impacts on population levels and shall not exceed 15 percent of the projected population of alligators greater than 4 feet in length for that unit.

(2) Harvest permit issuance:

(a) Harvest permits may be reserved for specific harvest units and harvest periods on a first-come-first-served basis through the Commission's Total Licensing System beginning 8:00 a.m., July 1 each year by paying \$20 for two CITES tags, pursuant to Section 372.6674, F.S., and paying for an alligator trapping license as required by Section 372.6673, F.S., or providing evidence of possession of an alligator trapping license valid through October 8 of the current year.

(b) Applicants for a harvest permit shall:

1. Be 18 years of age or older by September 1 in the current application year.
2. Not have been convicted of any violation of Section 372.663 or 372.664, F.S., or rules of the Commission relating to the illegal taking of any crocodilian species:
 - a. For a period of five (5) years preceding the date of application; or
 - b. For a period of ten (10) years preceding the date of application if such conviction involved the taking of an endangered crocodilian species.
3. Reserve only one permit.

(c) Permits shall be issued upon determination that the applicant meets the requirements of this subsection.

(d) Two CITES tags shall be issued with each harvest permit, except that two harvest tags bearing the letters "MER" shall also be issued with harvest permits for management units for which the best available scientific data indicates the average mercury concentrations in alligators therein exceeds the Federal limit for legal sale of the meat.

(e) Harvest permits shall be valid only for the management unit and harvest period indicated thereon, and harvest permits and their associated harvest tags, if issued, and CITES tags are not transferable.

(3) Alligator trapping requirements:

(a) Alligators may only be taken in accordance with the provisions of the alligator harvest permit.

(b) Alligators may be taken from 1/2 hour before sunset to 1/2 hour after sunrise during the harvest period specified in the harvest permit. Harvest periods shall be from 1/2 hour before sunset on October 1 through 1/2 hour after sunrise on October 8, and from either 1/2 hour before sunset on September 1 through 1/2 hour after sunrise on September 8, or 1/2 hour before sunset on September 8 through 1/2 hour after sunrise on September 15, or 1/2 hour before sunset on September 15 through 1/2 hour after sunrise on September 22, or 1/2 hour before sunset on September 22 through 1/2 hour after sunrise on October 1,

except as otherwise provided in the harvest permit.

(c) Only non-hatchling alligators may be taken.

(d) Alligators may be taken only by the use of baited, wooden pegs less than two (2) inches in length attached to a hand-held restraining line and hand-held snares, harpoons, gigs, snatch hooks, and manually operated spears, spearguns, crossbows and bows with projectiles attached to a restraining line. The use of baited hooks, gig-equipped bang sticks, or firearms for taking alligators is prohibited except that bang sticks are permitted for taking alligators attached to a restraining line. Any persons actively participating in the taking of alligators as provided herein shall possess an alligator trapping license or alligator trapping agent's license.

(e) Alligators may only be taken in the area specified in the alligator harvest permit.

(f) The permittee's agents licensed pursuant to Section 372.6673, F.S., and any licensed alligator trapper may take alligators as provided in the harvest permit but only in the presence of the permittee. Persons licensed as alligator trapping agents other than those licensed under the permittee's alligator trapping license are not authorized to take alligators pursuant to this section.

(g) Alligators shall be killed immediately upon capture.

(h) Immediately upon killing, a CITES tag issued by the Commission and a harvest tag, if issued, shall be locked through the skin of the carcass within six (6) inches of the tip of the tail. The CITES tag shall remain attached to the alligator hide until the hide is tanned, taxidermy mounted, or exported from the state. The harvest tag, if issued, shall remain attached to the alligator until processing. CITES tags shall be used only one time, and the possession of any alligator hide not tagged as prescribed herein is prohibited, and such hide shall be subject to seizure and forfeiture to the Commission under the provisions of Section 372.73, F.S.

(i) An alligator harvest report form (FWC form 1001AT, effective April 30, 2000) provided by the Commission shall be completed by the permittee within 24 hours of taking each alligator and prior to the transfer of the carcass to another person. The permittee shall submit a legible copy of the alligator harvest report form to the Commissioner's Tallahassee Office, 620 South Meridian Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600 for receipt no later than October 22.

(j) Tags issued under this section shall remain the property of the Commission until affixed as provided herein. Tags issued pursuant to this section may be possessed only by the permittee or his licensed agents prior to use. The permittee shall be strictly liable in ensuring that possession of unused tags is limited to persons authorized under this rule.

(k) All unused CITES tags shall be refundable and shall be returned by the permittee to the Commission's Tallahassee Office, 620 South Meridian Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600, no later than October 22. It shall be a violation of this section for any person to possess any unused CITES tag(s) issued pursuant to this section after October 22. Permits may be denied, pursuant to Rule 68A-5.004, F.A.C., to applicants who have previously failed to return unused tags and complete forms as specified herein.

(4) Alligator processing and sale of parts.

(a) Alligator meat not discarded shall be processed or sold in accordance with Rule 68A-25.052, F.A.C.

(b) Commission personnel shall be granted access to collect biological data on and specimens from any alligators taken under the provisions of this rule, provided that specimens shall only be taken when necessary for the management of the species.

(5) Nothing herein shall prohibit the executive director from establishing special restrictions or exemptions from this rule for the purpose of conducting experimental alligator harvests on designated areas pursuant to Rule 68A-9.002, F.A.C.

Specific Authority Art. IV, Sec. 9, Fla. Const.

Law Implemented Art. IV, Sec. 9, Fla. Const., 372.6672, 372.6673 FS.

History—New 5-5-88, Amended 2-14-89, 4-11-90, 4-14-92, 4-29-93, 7-1-94, 3-30-95, 4-1-96, 9-15-96, 4-12-98, Formerly 39-25.042, Amended 4-30-00, 5-13-02, 4-11-04.

68A-25.052 Regulations Governing the Processing of Alligators and the Sale of Alligator Meat and Parts.

(1) Meat from legally acquired alligators that is not discarded and not processed for sale shall be packaged and labeled to indicate the CITES tag number and license holder's name in indelible ink on each package.

(2) Meat from alligators taken pursuant to Rule 68A-25.042, F.A.C., to which harvest tags have been affixed bearing the letters AMER@ as part of the tag numbers may not be sold for human consumption and if not discarded must be permanently and visibly labeled "NOT FOR SALE, Recommend: NOT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION."

(3) Alligator meat may only be sold if imported or if processed from carcasses skinned in a permitted alligator processing facility and processed and packaged in such a facility as provided in this section.

(4) Alligator processing facilities may be established and operated only under permit from the executive director and shall be licensed as required by s. 372.6673, F.S. The criteria for issuance of an alligator processing facility permit are as follows:

(a) Persons may indicate their intent to establish an alligator processing facility when submitting their alligator trapping, alligator farming, or alligator processing license application, or if already licensed under s. 372.6673, F.S., they may submit a written request for an alligator processing facility permit to the Commission's Bureau of Licensing and Permitting, Tallahassee office, at least 30 days prior to the proposed date of operation. Such application or written request shall include a copy of the current food permit from the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for the proposed facility.

(b) The executive director shall not issue an alligator processing facility permit or shall revoke said permit for any person who has been convicted of any violation of ss. 372.663 or 372.664, F.S., or the rules of the Commission relating to the illegal taking of any crocodilian species:

1. For five (5) years following such conviction, or;
2. For ten (10) years following, if such conviction involves the taking of an endangered crocodilian species.

(5) Provisions for the operation of alligator processing facilities:

(a) Alligator processors and their designated employees as provided by permit may receive and possess legally acquired, tagged, unskinned alligator carcasses and skinned alligator carcasses with the CITES tag number and, if applicable, the harvest tag number recorded on an attached tag for processing of meat and hides provided:

1. For alligators taken pursuant to rules 68A-25.003, 68A-25.032, and 68A-25.042, F.A.C., the alligator harvest report form (FWC form 1001AT, effective April 30, 2000) shall be completed and signed immediately upon receipt, and shall be further completed upon processing to indicate the amount of meat packaged.

A copy of the harvest report form shall accompany the carcass until processing.

2. Written records of the number, source, and disposition of all alligator carcasses received, bought, sold, or transferred, including copies of Alligator Harvest Report Forms (FWC form 1001AT), shall be maintained for a period of one year following sale, transfer, or disposal of the carcass, meat, hides, or parts thereof.

(b) Commission personnel shall be granted access to any permitted facility to collect biological specimens from and data on any alligators possessed under this subsection, provided that specimens shall only be collected when necessary for the management of the species.

(c) Processing and storage facilities and all Commission required records shall be subject to inspection by Commission personnel during reasonable hours.

(d) Meat processed or re-processed for sale must be packaged in a sealed, tamper-proof package (a package that must be permanently and noticeably altered if opened to remove or add meat). Each package must be permanently labeled to indicate the name of the processor processing the alligator(s), the CITES tag number(s) from the alligator(s) from which the meat was taken, the date packaged, and the number of pounds of meat enclosed. Each package and label shall be used to package meat only one time.

(6) Provisions for the sale of alligator meat:

(a) Written records of all alligator meat sales, with the exception of retail sales to the consumer, shall be maintained for a period of one year following sale, and shall include the name of the seller and buyer, date of sale, and amount sold. Such records shall be open to inspection by Commission personnel during reasonable hours.

(b) All alligator meat purchased shall remain in the original package until the meat is re-processed or prepared for consumption, and packages shall be used to package meat only one time.

(c) Packages containing lawfully acquired alligator meat packaged and labeled in accordance with this rule may be shipped in intrastate or interstate commerce.

(7) Provisions for the importation of alligator meat to Florida:

(a) Meat must be acquired and processed in accordance with the applicable health and sanitation requirements and laws of the state of origin.

(b) All imported alligator meat shall be shipped in a tamper-proof package.

(c) Each package of imported alligator meat shall be labeled with a seal to identify the state of origin, the processor, the number of pounds of meat enclosed, and the date packaged.

(8) The feet, viscera, or skeletal parts of lawfully acquired alligators may be retained or transferred provided that all transfers, with the exception of retail sales to the consumer, shall be documented in writing to indicate the kind and quantity of items and date transferred and the name and address of each recipient, and such records shall be maintained for a period of one year.

(9) Manufactured goods wholly or partly composed of alligator hide, organs, teeth, or skull, or other skeletal material may only be sold in accordance with provisions of Rule 68A-25.002, F.A.C.

(10) These requirements shall not be construed to supersede the regulatory authority of any federal, state or local entity regarding the processing or handling of food products, but shall be deemed supplemental thereto. Alligators processed hereunder shall be handled and processed in compliance with all applicable sanitation and permit requirements of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the county health department of the county in which the facility is located, and any other federal, state, or local authorities.

Specific Authority Art. IV, Sec. 9, Fla. Const.

Law Implemented Art. IV, Sec. 9, Fla. Const. 372.6672, 372.6673, FS.

History -- New 5-5-88, 2-14-89, 4-11-90, 4-1-96, 9-15-96, 6-1-97, 4-12-98, 4-15-99, Formerly 39-25.052, Amended 4-30-00.

